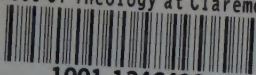


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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

GOOD MINISTERS OF JESUS CHRIST
A MAN'S RELIGION: LETTERS TO MEN
THIS MIND

IN THE SCHOOL OF CHRIST

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In The School of Christ

By
WILLIAM FRASER McDOWELL

One of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church



THE ABINGDON PRESS
NEW YORK CINCINNATI

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WILLIAM FRASER McDOWELL

Printed in the United States of America

*To my Wife
and the dear memory
of our Daughter*

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Preface

I AVAIL myself of the privilege offered by a preface to say some things which do not belong in the body of a book. These are altogether personal statements, and are not intended either to explain or to anticipate the pages which follow.

These studies are an attempt to express certain ideals for personal and ministerial life which are the product of many influences and the growth of many years. Some of the influences are here gratefully named and all are thankfully acknowledged; but after thirty years of reading, listening, writing and speaking on such themes as these the lines between a man's reading and his own thinking are not always clearly defined and distinct even to his own mind. I do not doubt, therefore, that many readers—if there should be many—will recognize in these pages many ideas and even expressions which belong to other

men. I make this large and grateful acknowledgment to cover all that is not specifically acknowledged in the lectures themselves. The lectures will in large measure serve their purpose if they pass on to other men the influences, inspirations and instruction, recognized and unrecognized, received by me from many sources throughout my whole ministry. The extent of these influences it would be impossible for me to overstate. Men and books have done their work and left their permanent mark. I cannot forget, for example, that on my way to my first year in the School of Theology I carried with me and read with absorption the "Yale Lectures" of both Simpson and Brooks, and that within the first few weeks of my life in the School of Theology, Bruce's *Training of the Twelve* and Brooks' *Influence of Jesus* came into my hands. If I am able to transmit to my brethren, young and old, any small part of what these and other men have done for me, my gratitude will be unmeasured.

The small volume is dedicated to my wife and the dear memory of our daughter. Their

love has been life's finest and highest personal inspiration. But in a very real sense the lectures are also dedicated to "the bishops and other clergy" of all the churches with the earnest and constant prayer that in all churches, in all places, and at all times the men chosen by Christ may make full proof of their ministry.

The preparation of this volume has brought me anew for many months into the New Testament with its wonderful story of Jesus Christ and His disciples, and into many volumes interpretative of this perpetual record. This experience has been an unspeakable privilege in the midst of a life in which administrative cares tend constantly to absorb all energies. And the experience has created anew a joy and high-heartedness in thinking of the ministry itself, even in a day in which it is thought that the ministry of Jesus Christ has lost much of its attractiveness.

The gracious and sympathetic hearing, the generous and beautiful Christian courtesy of Vanderbilt University and the people of Nashville during six days, made the delivery

of the course an event to be remembered with profoundest appreciation while life lasts.

I make special mention of most valuable help in the preparation of the lectures for final delivery and publication, received from my dear friends, the Reverend Ezra Squier Tipple, D. D., of Drew Theological Seminary, the Reverend Charles M. Stuart, D. D., Litt. D., editor of the *Northwestern Christian Advocate*, and the Reverend Doremus A. Hayes, S. T. D., of Garrett Biblical Institute.

WILLIAM FRASER MCDOWELL.

Chicago, Illinois, June 1, 1910.

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LECTURE I

CHOSEN BY THE MASTER :
TO HEAR WHAT HE SAYS

LECTURE I

CHOSEN BY THE MASTER: TO HEAR WHAT HE SAYS

UNDER the general subject announced I seek to interpret the present opportunity and task of the Christian ministry in some of its vital phases. The theme, however, relates itself so largely to the life of the whole church in the world that our studies together will not be at all technical or professional. I trust that both the subject and its treatment may be of real interest to all who love our Lord and long for the coming of His kingdom.

I am mindful of the terms of the generous foundation of this lectureship, and devoutly trust that this study comes clearly within the scope of those pious purposes which, in establishing the Cole Lectureship, put wealth at the service of truth, that truth might have a larger place in the world.

The invitation of your faculty and college

of bishops to present these lectures awakens not only my personal gratitude but the deep and sincere appreciation of the church whose servant I am. From that church and for myself I bring affectionate thanks.

Do not expect too literal adherence to our subject. I shall not stray far from it, but shall not slavishly adhere to it. A rhetorical figure becomes very tiresome if overworked. An analogy does not look well, crawling through six or seven lectures "on all fours." We are after the chief things in the School of Christ, not its mechanics. And these chief things are the master, the students, the truth, the program, the fellowship, the spirit and the results. After these and their meaning we shall search.

I am always seeking to interpret to myself and to my brethren the ministry I have hoped and am yet hoping to achieve. One would better lose his life than his ideals. And one can easily be forgiven for trying to interpret his ideals, not his practices, to his fellows in the same field. That keeps the dreams alive, the ideals fresh. One must

never cease to think of the kind of minister he wishes and purposes to be before the end of the day comes.

The particular Scriptures upon which our study will be based are these :

“ And He goeth up into the mountain, and calleth unto Him whom He Himself would ; and they went unto Him. And He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach, and to have authority to cast out demons.”—*Mark iii. 13-16.*

“ As Thou didst send Me into the world, even so sent I them into the world.”—*John xvii. 18.*

The men thus chosen and sent are now in our stately phrase called “the glorious company of the apostles,” but that is what they became, not what they were at first. “They companied Him all the time that He went in and out among them.” They became a glorious company by being in glorious company. How simple, unaffected and suggestive this record is ! We seem to be reading some paragraphs out of our own history. We can

easily interpret this whole scene; the perfection of the Master, the imperfection, the strangeness, the hopefulness of the student; the slow communication of truth, the slower grasp of it; the Master's interest, the disciples' response—we can see it all. The eyes of our understanding are enlightened by a like experience.

It is a solemn thing when Master and men get thus together. It means much to the world to this very day that Saul met Gamaliel, that Wesley went to Oxford and that Stanley went to Rugby. Responsive life falls under the influence of masterful life in these educational processes, for the weal or woe of the very world itself. For the door into the School of Christ is so placed as to command a clear view of the door out. The matriculant has the graduate in view. Entering relates to departing. Companying with Him bears on being sent forth to cast out demons and fill the world with truth. The noble gateway to Cornell University contains this inscription which every student reads: "So enter that daily thou mayest be-

come more thoughtful and more learned.
So depart that daily thou mayest be more
useful to thy country and to mankind."

The training of the twelve was a part of the plan for the saving of the world. The Master gave them the "lion's share" of His attention, but not for their sakes. He gave them more than half of His teaching, the best of His energy and the most of His time. But He knew what He was doing. These were not more important than the others, any more than we are. They were only important for the others. He would have been glad to have better men. He would still be glad. But He was glad to have such as they were and is glad to have such as we are. They were not a glorious company when they came to Him. They were not much more than an average group, in spite of the two or three conspicuous ones, but "He breathed on them and made them illustrious"; or, as Whittier says:

"They touched His garment's fold, and soon,
The Heavenly Alchemist transformed their very dust
to gold."

They went with Him, they stayed with Him, they learned of Him. Long afterwards "men took knowledge of them that they had been with Him." This is the eternal order.

*he
done
was.*

We must be impressed with the method of Jesus as here shown. Did He know how short His ministry would be? And was this the wisest way for Him to spend it? Into His innermost thoughts we may not enter, but clearly this was the wisest way. He wanted to reach the world. Through these men He could do it. There was no better way. He wanted to enlighten the world. He could do it in no surer way than to fill these men with light. He called them the light of the world before He was done. He wanted to leaven the mass. It does not take much leaven, it only requires real leaven to do it. One man counts for more than another. One can chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight. "Jesus began the salvation of the world by training twelve Christlike men and the whole Christian world now acknowledges that it was the wise and divine way." Not much stress

need be laid upon their number. There were enough of them to give Him His chance upon nearly every type of character. He is a poor reader of the record who does not find himself in it. We need not go off any campus or out of any community to duplicate the group. We are like them in greater or less degree. If we are disturbed by their commonplace qualities, their narrow provincialism, their petty prejudices, their childishness and jealousies, their quick tempers and constant weaknesses, we would do well to look for these qualities in ourselves. That early group is gone. Our group remains. But the Master has much the same task with us as with them. He left them mightily improved. It paid the world for them to go into the School of Christ. For they came out a dozen of the most useful and serviceable men in all history. That miracle, as it seems to me, is about the largest that He wrought. It gives me hope that He will do it again. It would attract more attention if some day the Master would walk on Lake Michigan as on a sidewalk, or quiet its toss-

ing waves by a word. But it will be worth more to truth and to the world if there on the shores of the lake He shall transform the raw human material He gets into the men that He wants. That is the real miracle. As long as that is going on the denial of the supernatural is pure foolishness. As long as He keeps on making apostles and prophets out of such disciples as He secures it will be easy to believe in His deity. Only God can do that kind of work. "What He did with them proves what can be made of ordinary men when they surrender themselves to the guidance of His spirit."

This is enough by way of introduction. We must come to details. A school offers three fundamental things, viz: truth, practice, and example; or in other words the curriculum, the relation of that curriculum to life, and the exemplification of the truth and the activity in the teacher. These are primary matters in education. A school is good or bad as it meets or fails to meet these tests. Applying this outline to our study we should say that the student en-

ters the School of Christ for three supreme things :

1. To hear what Jesus says, or to master His teachings ;
2. To see what Jesus does, or to become familiar with His program ;
3. To learn what Jesus is, or to become acquainted with His personality.

This is the threefold task of the student. He will be sent forth

1. To proclaim and interpret the Master's teaching to the world ;
2. To continue and fulfill the Master's purpose in the world ;
3. To reveal the Master's character to the world.

For ease of recollection we might resort to alliteration and say that one is sent forth with a proclamation, a program and a personality. The preparatory task of the minister is to get his truth, form his life program, and to become a man. His public task is to use his materials, complete his program and consecrate the man he has become to the service of men. This is the simple outline of all I have to say in these days.

No one can read the Gospels without seeing that Jesus laid stress upon three things: His teaching, His work, His person. He did not lay the whole stress upon any one of them. He looked upon His teaching as a revelation, upon His deeds as a revelation, and upon Himself as a revelation. He brought to bear upon life His truth, His activities and His personality. These features cannot be torn apart without violence. It would be like tearing the seamless robe. In the case of the Master the unity of teaching, doing and being is absolute. We use different terms, like prophet, priest and king; like teaching, miracle and person, not to indicate independent and exclusive features of Christ's total work, but vitally related and essential aspects of that work. The authority of Jesus extends to teaching, to activity and to life. He spoke with authority, He exercised authority over men and nature, He was authority in the realm of life or personality. He was a prophet mighty in deed and in word and in character. On this basis we shall study together, using that fruitful and pro-

found principle of Bible study which yields such rich results to life. We shall study our subject with the Bible, using it as a means rather than as an object, seeking to ascertain not merely what it says but what it teaches. We shall study its statements in the light of its principles.

Let us look now for a moment at the place of teaching in the life and plan of Jesus. What value, absolute and relative, did He place upon what He said? Surely it is fair to Him, or to any great teacher, to obtain His own estimate of the features of His own ministry. Here Jesus seems exceedingly illuminative. Apparently He gave a supreme but not an exclusive, a high but not solitary emphasis to His teaching. He exalted it but not to the discrediting of His deeds or His person. He did not "lay the whole stress of His religion upon one part of it."

Men have had trouble at this point. Men naturally tend to become specialists. The teaching of Jesus looks so large to one man that he exalts it above everything else. For such a man the supreme sentence is: "Ye

shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." He studies critically, and finally writes upon the teaching of Jesus. He makes a classified collection of the words of Jesus and calls it the substance or essence of the Gospel. He tells the world that this is all one needs to know. He sets the parables and prayers and sermons above the miracles. With a great show of faith and liberality such a man often declares that he could lose the miracles out of the record and still retain essential Christianity in Jesus' teachings.

To another type the work of Jesus looks so large that he practically disparages everything else. For such a man the supreme sentence is: "He went about doing good." Deeds are set over against words. The atonement is at the centre of such a view. The cross ranks above everything else. Jesus is classed as a man of action rather than a man of speech. The priest is exalted above the prophet.

Or the person of Christ gets chief place. Not what He said or what He did but what

He was is the supreme thing in such a view. His person becomes the test for creed or platform. Men make the assertion of Christ's deity a shibboleth, the final test of orthodoxy. And some such have asserted fervently the deity of His person along with a virtual denial of the divinity of His work.

Nobody is finally satisfied with this method, though the tendency has existed through the whole history of the Church, as many have pointed out. Words are set over against deeds. We distinguish between men of speech and men of action. Our experience with men fairly drives us to such distinctions. We do not expect to find all good qualities in one person.

The integrity and balance of Jesus' life amaze us because we have nowhere else seen anything like it. In our experience the three great terms, prophet, priest and king, would assert diversity, if not contradiction. In Jesus they declare with emphasis an unbreakable unity. His work, His teaching and His life were all on a level and all of a piece. One feature cannot be torn away without ruin to

all. The perfect deed and the perfect speech fit perfectly into His perfect life. The saying and the cross are not two but one in Christ's life. You cannot choose between miracle of utterance and miracle of healing. You cannot say that one is more valuable than the other in a life where both are essential. Open graves and parables stand together. Whether speaking to one or to a crowd, whether working a miracle or being nailed to a cross, He was working His Father's works and speaking as never man spake. Possibly the very first lesson we have to learn in the School of Christ is the high but not solitary place of truth and its utterance, the place of wisdom and its teaching. Teaching is important in any great life, not because teaching stands alone, but because it stands related. The man must not speak like an archangel and behave like a fool or a fiend. Many excellent and active men, pure and diligent men, have suffered decay or atrophy concerning truth and its teaching. The wealth of Jesus' ministry was not one sided. It had no shrivelled or feeble features.

The place of teaching in His ministry was determined by the purpose or object of His teaching. The objects of speech should lie behind the subjects and the methods of speech. The object of the sermon should condition the subject of it. The final cause should determine all that follows. Now Jesus was not primarily a philosopher or a wonder worker or even a model person. He was the divine Redeemer, in what He said, in what He did and in what He was. He was the Redeemer when speaking the parables as when dying on the cross; the Redeemer when preaching the Sermon on the Mount as when suffering in the garden. This was and is His highest name. There will be no higher name known in earth or heaven. The unity of His three-fold life is the unity of His supreme purpose. It is not the unity of sermon or of cross. It is the unity of that ethical, religious, vital purpose that binds way and truth and life together for the redemption of men. Because of this final purpose He will use all perfect intellectual forms and fully satisfy the intellectual life by His teaching; He will use truth

not as a philosophy, not as a body of doctrine, not as a theory of life, not as a science, but as a living force to set men free. He will not choose and adopt His style as a stylist for the style's sake, but as a Redeemer for humanity's sake. He wanted men to have right ideas, but chiefly in order that they might have right lives. He described the kingdom so well because He wanted to get men into it.

Remember that Jesus was not seeking to formulate a series of phrases. He would hardly have chosen wayside wells, fishing-boats and similar places for such a purpose. Nor would He have failed to write if this had been His chief concern. He knew that men are not saved by a phrase, however exact, but by a person. The end of all His speech was the revelation of the saving person to unsaved life. This requires perfection.

Certain types of mind have been much scandalized over Christ's failure to frame and phrase the substance of His teaching so that it would be handy for use in debate or as a creed or for ready reference. Repairing this

oversight has been the chief task of some of these men. But phrase making, even religious phrase making, is almost the lowest form of religious ability. Christ was concerned with truth for life. He was the least academic and the most vital of all teachers. He was like John Bunyan's man running through the streets crying, "Life, life, life!" Truth for this purpose had to come through personality. It could not come in a series of propositions. God could not bring His perfect message except through an incarnation. The nature of it and the purpose of it made a personality essential. What Jesus was made vibrant what He said.

The place and purpose of teaching in Jesus' ministry determined the manner of it. This struck His hearers first. It was interesting and won their attention; it was gracious and won their confidence; it was with authority and compelled their respect. Before they took hold of its substance its manner arrested them. And this is not an accident. If one is bent on making a series of exact propositions he does not need to be

interesting or gracious ; he only needs to be accurate and precise. But because Jesus was bent on a far nobler purpose He was the supremely interesting teacher of the world. The centre of the Herbartian principle is that the sin of a teacher is to be uninteresting. Being interesting is a quality that small men and some great ones despise, always to their hurt. It is a quality that weak men put on and simply exhibit their folly. For the quality of being interesting is fundamental, not artificial. It goes far beneath the manner to the matter of one's discourse, and has quite as much to do with the substance as with the form of speech. It is fundamental to one who shares the Master's purpose. Stupidity, dullness, even when called by nobler names, like profundity and depth, are fundamentally fatal. They are not fatal to the maker of propositions, but wholly so to the Saviour of men.

This vital quality of being interesting comes not by nature or offhand to pupils like ourselves. There is no such thing here as spontaneous generation. And being inter-

esting is not the same as being entertaining. Do not imagine that any cheap quality is a substitute for it. It is noble and dignified like the quality of being serious and true. We must not be misled by the apparent ease and spontaneousness of our Master's utterances. What He did with evident ease can only be done by us with constant pains. But He took pains. He said what He had to say as well as He could say it, which is just as well as it could be said. I heard one praising the unstudied utterances of Jesus, setting far below them all the most careful utterances of all other men, and discounting carefulness of speech in Christ's name. But his emphasis was almost wholly on their apparent spontaneity rather than upon their manifest perfection. And because his own utterances were totally unstudied he thought they were like the Master's. If you like that you can do it. Extemporized perfection is not very attractive.

I have a friend who is an almost perfect story teller. His friends watch with keen delight the exquisite and artistic perfection

with which he always uses the precise word and perfect turn of phrase. If one is going to be a story teller it is worth while. One owes that to the story, to the audience and to himself.

Now the great preachers, faithful students in the School of Christ, have made it a matter of conscience to say what they had to say as well as they could. A slovenly sentence offends like soiled linen. No wonder the common people heard Christ gladly ; it is a wonder that they listen to some men at all. We owe a triple debt to the man who, being a good man, brings a good message and brings it as it ought to be brought. I can never forget a certain sermon on the Beatitudes by a man whom I cannot name here. I speak reverently when I say that I think the maker of the Beatitudes must have been grateful for this noble exposition of them. Arnold says that Gray doubled his force by his style. Any man can. We talk of gifts of expression. If you have them thank God and make them perfect ; if you have them not remember that what is denied

you as a gift may be gained by "daily, nightly and eternal toil." I cannot go into a discussion of the qualities of a good style. But I cannot get into the substance of our Master's teaching without declaring to you that He said what He had to say as well as it could be said. Nothing was unconsidered or ill considered. And this, too, was part of the conscience of our Master. He did everything like that. He did it as well as it could be done. He thought it worth while to do it perfectly. And our Master is our model. Edward Everett Hale once said that a whole generation of Harvard men wrote good English because of "dear Ned Channing's influence." The best religious speech in the world ought to come from the students in the School of Christ. They have an exhibition of religious speech in its perfection.

It would be a vain and pedantic repetition of familiar matters to call detailed attention to the various forms used by our Master while those early students were with Him. It would, however, be wholly improper to

overlook this entirely. He used every good and useful form of religious speech because of the end He had in view. Wishing to touch life at every point, using language and truth always as the noble instrument of His perfect intention, He employed all the forms of thought and speech necessary to this purpose. The student who has heard a teacher only in public address has been cheated somewhere. He ought to have conversations, prayers, utterances on special occasions and something like parables to remember also. I can hear across the years the prayers of McCabe, Warren and Latimer. Listening to them we obtained a new sense of the meaning of intercession and the value of prayer. They made life overflow with rapture and grace; they put the cry of the cross into the language of petition and saved it from selfishness. Reverence for the act of prayer restrains us from saying what ought to be said about certain exhibitions of it. But you wonder sometimes that men listen to it at all. And you wonder often whether God does. Then up out of our Master's life

comes that thrilling cry of triumph: "I know that Thou hearest me always." And we are in the School of Christ to hear what He said in His prayers as well as other speech, and to hear how He said it. "Master, teach us to pray, not as John taught his disciples," but as Thou Thyself didst do it, so that perchance He will hear us always also.

So with religious conversation. Into this too He put conscience. Many men simply put into it stupidity or clumsiness or cleverness or dullness or impertinence. His conversations with one or a group reveal what can be done with conversation when a man and a man are face to face. Life does not offer a much larger opportunity than this. It is doubtful whether any is less perfectly used. Yet some have learned its value and the act of doing it. I shall forever count it a blessing beyond words that on many an afternoon I walked over the hills near Boston with a certain philosopher while he talked of the deep things of God.

The manner of our Master in the high use

of all these noble forms of speech was not intended to perish with His passing from our sight. I partly paraphrase and partly quote what another man has said of it : " He had no cathedrals, or candles, or paintings, or incense. He made His words take their place. His phrases were candles giving forth a sacred light. His sentences were paintings picturing things which the heart adores. His paragraphs were incense filling all the place with a heavenly aroma. His words gave colour and fragrance, and life and fire, and left the soul flooded with melody in God's immediate presence."

And I apply to our Master what Mr. Kipling has said in another connection : " He spoke so that the words became alive and walked up and down in the hearts of all His hearers. A bare half hundred words . . . spoken twenty centuries ago can still lead whole nations into or out of captivity, can open to us the doors of three worlds or stir us so intolerably that we can scarcely abide to look at our own souls."

The quotation of Christ's sentences is one

of the easiest intellectual exercises because the sentences are so perfect ; the mastery of Christ's teaching is the consummate intellectual achievement. Taking texts is not difficult, especially when there are so many good ones, but I venture to say to you that when you have mastered the teaching of Jesus you may have your degree. Those earliest pupils were slow to understand what He said, even when they had the benefit of His own accent, emphasis, gesture and look. Their story is not altogether reassuring to us. Maybe we are like them chiefly in our slowness and dullness. The effort to master the teaching of Jesus was never greater than in our own day. We have come upon very good times in the history of the Church, for that reason. It is good to live in an era which seeks to put the teaching of the Supreme Teacher in its real place, to give it its true standing and to give it a true interpretation to the world. A dozen volumes could be named containing more or less satisfactory attempts to do this work for the teaching of Jesus. A few have been so foolish as to try

to give the substance of His teaching. It proves, however, to be all substance as we have it. What may have been true of His unrecorded sayings it is idle to guess. What we have can be amplified, expanded and diluted, but not condensed.

Just as the end Christ had in view determined the form of His utterance, so that end determined the matter of His teaching. His ministry was the answer to life's cry. What He said and how He said it alike came into life. There was no speculation in it; no talk for talk's sake; no mere discussion of subjects; no academic use of truth. All His teaching was for life, the life of man and the life of society. This is the true norm of it as of all true teaching. St. Paul was urging this test when he told the Thessalonians to prove all things. He had been speaking of spiritualities and prophesyings and then he said: Prove them. Bring them to the test of life. Are they good to live by? They will bear the test of logic if they meet this vital test. This is divine pragmatism. There is in Jesus' teaching no

answer to idle curiosity, no encouragement to the thing we are so fond of, no verbal fencing, no argument for argument's sake. Always He spoke the truth, spoke it in love, spoke it in love for the truth as a philosopher might, spoke it in love for men like a true redeemer. He did not answer directly many of those questions which then and now perplex men's minds. They existed then as now. He flooded life with the light of His life and the questions vanished, even though mystery remained. He loved truth not for truth's sake but for what He knew it would do for men. He was thus more than a philosopher. He loved men as He saw them in the light of what truth would do for them, and was thus other than a philanthropist. Truth to Him was not as to a medieval theologian a system of doctrines to defend, nor as to a reformer a code to obey, nor as to a scientist a collection of facts. It was a thing of personal power and had to do with setting out into true freedom John and Peter and Nicodemus and the disputatious woman at the well.

Those early students in the School of Christ found day by day that the things they were hearing Him say were laying hold of the roots of their being, transforming thought, emotion and will. Hearing what He said they found it good for them, and felt that they must become like Him. He taught them, for example, to repent of their bad lives. I heard once years ago an elaborate sermon on that subject. It began with an allusion to the place of repentance in the plan of salvation. You would have supposed that repentance existed that it might come in the proper place in the way of salvation. But nobody repented. The sermon was entirely correct and orthodox and dead. Being orthodox and dead it might as well have been buried. I think the preacher, if he had lived long enough ago, would have been called a Scribe. He had made a sermon on repentance. Apparently he thought one due about that time. It was well made, as well as a faithful carpenter could make it. It was properly jointed and smoothed and oiled, a good piece of sermonic furniture,

made of good wood well put together. And nobody repented. Nobody was expected to. The preacher was a good man, but he had never been in the fourth chapter of Matthew at all. The kingdom was at the gates of the small town where he was preaching; there were sick all about and no hospital near; there were men and boys possessed of demons, and so far as he was concerned no relief for them. There were a hundred things worth doing which unrepentant men could not do, and the worker in wood left it for a later preacher, a generation later, after the demons had destroyed many who were dear to cry out like the Master: Repent because goodness is going to get a chance right here in this town; the kingdom is at hand. And in that later day men flung down their sins, turned their backs upon them, and opened the village gates for the kingdom to come in, all because a man like us had been in the School of Christ to hear what Jesus said. One man was carefully explaining a doctrine. The other was shooting life through with truth. One man had rationalized the thing,

the other had both rationalized it and vitalized it.

The parables have this note in common: the principle of good is thrown into every form of life that life may be saved. The evangel breaking out of the skies comes to men at their common tasks. The privileges of the kingdom are all mixed with the duties of life. The Sermon on the Mount is not wholly a proclamation of good news, except so far as the opening of a life of good is always such a proclamation. The perfectly tremendous "therefore" at the end of that sermon grips character and conduct like a vise. This, they must have felt, is not mere teaching. This is teaching with a motive and a purpose. This is teaching with power. There was no despising of doctrine as the manner of some is, but a setting of doctrines and character into such relation that truth looked big and valuable.

Many writers have sought to give the outline of Jesus' teaching. It does not easily lend itself to outline. "What we want is not a summation of doctrine. We have had enough

of that. What we want a great deal more is something to give us breadth of standing and a greater vitality of idea." Sanday in his Hastings' Dictionary article on "Jesus Christ" says there are five distinctive and characteristic topics in the teaching of Jesus:

- (1) The Fatherhood of God.
- (2) The Kingdom of God.
- (3) The Subjects or members of the Kingdom.
- (4) The Messiah.
- (5) The Paraclete and the Trinity of God.

Perhaps that is as good a summary of topics as any, but we must immediately feel how unsatisfactory it is. Lyman Abbott in his book *The Christian Ministry* says: "There have been many attempts to formulate the teaching of Jesus. Of these the earliest is that contained in the Epistle to Titus: 'The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God

and our Saviour Jesus Christ' (Titus ii. 11-13)." This summary indicates, he thinks, what the early Church thought of Christ's teaching, and also that it thought of Christ as a teacher of systematic truths, or of truths which could be systematized, and which being systematized would be comprehensive and complete, covering all the categories of human experience. "For man stands in four relations in his life involving ethical obligation, and only four;—relation to the material world, relation to his fellow man, relation to God, and relation to the future. And Jesus taught us how we should live in these four relations."

The principles of life, that is what those first students had the chance to learn. Perhaps the whole case may be put in these two questions: What subjects did Jesus think important for life? And what did He think it important to say about them? Life in its essence does not change. So it comes to pass that teaching which both in substance and form had to be conditioned by time and space, addressed to a given generation in a

language which that generation understood, has remained fresh and vital through all the changing conditions of man's unchanging life through nineteen centuries. The ordinances and institutions of the world have undergone tremendous change. There are many governments now in existence wholly different in type and condition from any known in Christ's day. The vast Western world has been opened, one might almost say created, since the first disciples listened to Him. Christianity has become the religion of new races since His earthly life. Still the teachings of Jesus fit like the light or the atmosphere into all the changed conditions. For life has remained unchanged. And men feel that in New York and Chicago as in Bethany and Jerusalem His teachings still show the right relation between men and institutions, between rules and life, between character and property, between worship and obedience. And all this because the specific rules were so few and the general principles so large; and because He was fundamentally teaching men how to live.

We can still get the principles of Christ out of the statements of Christ. No doubt those first students had the same foolish desire that we and others have had for such specific rules as would have saved them from thinking, for such statements as would have given them a kind of mechanical certitude, "something fixed that you can quote and swear by." No doubt they like ourselves had the craving for accuracy of phrase. Such phrases serve well the purpose of mechanical evangelists, and debating, proof-text theologians. To those who only get part way into the secret of His teaching Jesus must ever be a distinct disappointment. The average man will forgive doctrinal unsoundness more readily than the least shadow of indefiniteness. But to those who go clear into His teaching, the result is beyond all words. It is not a "Body of Divinity" nor a code of rules for every emergency, nor a series of detached, unrelated sayings. It is a body of truth upon which life rests and out of which life grows ; a set of principles which do not act as substitutes for thought but which make thinking fruitful and not barren ;

a series of related sayings, no one contradicting another one, and all of the kind to which life in every age responds as true.

You can take a score of illustrations, all equally good. One of the categories of life is the category of human relations. Who is my neighbour and how shall I treat him, and what shall I expect of him? And there is not a word in the Gospels about apartment houses, or life in hotels, or classifications by streets. The social customs of His day were totally unlike the social customs of ours. A new industrial condition has come into the world. The fish trade is not what it was in Peter's time, but after all these centuries human life finds in the teaching of Jesus, illuminated by His life as all teaching must be, a perfectly luminous answer to all these hard questions. They are hard because we are unwilling to apply the teaching which we learn in this school. We are always tempted to stop with the statement rather than to discover and apply the principle.

Now the mastery of this teaching in its manner and its substance, its form and its

essence, its relation to activity and to personality, its eternal meaning under the forms of time, its germinal quality in all time, its universal meaning expressed in local terms, its living principles in its particular statements, its philosophy and its ethical quality, its religious value and literary perfection, its historic interest and world-wide application, —the mastery of this teaching is the supreme intellectual achievement of life. Upon this task one might spend his years. And when one has fully mastered the teaching of Jesus in its bearing upon life here and hereafter, life itself and its relations, he may go to the head of the procession.

I cannot close what I have to say to-day without two special words :

In the summary of Christ's teaching quoted by Sanday, what seems to me the supreme term was not mentioned, though it was implied. I set down here my conviction that the great term in the teaching was the term Salvation, the supreme impression upon those early pupils was that this Master of theirs was all men's Redeemer. We need not sur-

render now, or any time to a soft and unworthy evangelicalism. We need not forget that a word is always in danger of becoming a shibboleth. We must not forget the infinite scope and universal range of the teaching to which we are listening. We must hold it all together in its rich, manifold and integral relations; but we cannot get fairly into the centre of it except through the name given to our Master before His birth, the song the angels sang above the shepherds on the hills, the sentence He spoke the day He dined with Zaccheus. His doctrine of redemption lies at the centre of all He said. Into the wondering ears of those who heard Him long ago fell such words as forgiveness and new birth, and "go and sin no more." Whatever other impression they received or did not receive as they heard what Jesus said through the years, they should have obtained the impression that their Master was their Redeemer and the Redeemer of all men; that He told men truth so that they might be free from sin, that His teachings like His life were thrown into life for life's

redemption. This is true evangelicalism. This is the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, this is the very centre of the Gospel. You can cluster all the rest of the teaching of Jesus around this statement of fact: "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost."

The other word follows: This perfect teacher's highest service was not the statement of a truth nor the working of a miracle. Nor is this the highest and best impression He makes upon men. The best thing that He or any one has ever done for others is to make the true and living God real and living to them. Always there is a tendency for God to become a phrase. The revelation becomes a doctrine and the doctrine becomes a dogma. It has always been hard for men to keep God in all their thoughts. It is easier now for many to talk about the kingdom than to realize the God whose kingdom it is, and who alone gives the kingdom its value. Now go through that three years' course listening to what Jesus said and you will find Him saying a good deal besides

that which He said to the people about God. His consciousness of them does not seem more constant than His consciousness of God. "As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father." "I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me." And "I know that Thou hearest Me always."

What things those first students in the School of Christ had to remember! It is a wonder John could keep still so long. It is a greater wonder that he could write it down at all. I wonder sometimes what those early disciples used to say to one another about what He had said. For more than a quarter of a century I have carried in memory a certain forenoon in a plain, barren class room when we forgot to take notes while a man spoke of God. No one could ever recall how long he talked or quite what he said. None of us spoke of it that day. Long afterwards two worn and grizzled men found themselves sitting in a new upper room while they talked it over. Do you see? Need I go on? Sometimes the disciples heard what Jesus said while He was talking to God. Then

· they saw the heavens open and God was made real to them as Jesus spoke to Him. And we are in this school, still listening to what He says both to men and to God, what He says of men and of God.

“ Hushed be the noise and the strife of the schools,
Volume and pamphlet, sermon and speech,
The lips of the wise and the prattle of fools.

Let the Son of Man teach !

Who has the key of the future but He?

Who can unravel the knots in the skein ?

We have groaned and have travailed and sought
to be free :

We have travailed in vain.

Bewildered, dejected and prone to despair,

To Him as at first do we turn and beseech :

Our ears are all open ! Give heed to our prayer !

Oh, Son of Man, teach ! ”

LECTURE II

CHOSEN BY THE MASTER :
TO SEE WHAT HE DOES

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CHOSEN BY THE MASTER: TO SEE WHAT HE DOES

ONE day when John the Baptist was in prison, dejected and in doubt, his mind clouded and his heart troubled by conditions, he sent a messenger to ask Jesus a plain, direct question: "Art Thou He that should come or do we look for another?" What he heard in prison was not reassuring. The reported conduct of Jesus lacked vigour. John was in condition and in mood to demand that the Messiah should prove Himself by some severe or drastic measures against people clearly deserving such measures. John's own conduct had been more radical and heroic than anything reported to him concerning Christ. His question was petulant, possibly, but John ought not to be blamed for his anxiety. He had committed himself to Jesus. He now

felt that at least he was entitled to a plain and unmistakable declaration on the part of his leader.

We must always be grateful for the manner of our Master's replies to questions. He never meets petulance with more petulance nor proper anxiety with rebuke. Every reply fits exactly the question that brings it forth. You remember His luminous answer to John: "Go and tell John the things which ye hear and see. The blind receive their sight and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me."

The statement could not be more perfect or philosophical. The Messiah is authenticated by these two proofs: He brings good news to the needy and does good deeds for the needy. Miracles of mercy and gospel to the poor are the complete answers to the inquiry. The person is proved not by a declaration but by an irresistible inference. What one says and what one does give the

basis for a judgment as to what he is. Speech and action are the expressions of personality always.

We are concerned to-day with the program of the Master, or with seeing what He did or proposed to do, just as yesterday we were engaged with what He said and how He said it.

We have grown used to the story of Christ's deeds. Some of us have grown professionally hardened with reference to them. His ordinary and His extraordinary deeds alike seem to many of us to have been wrought so that we could make sermons about them, or argue about them in discussions concerning the evidences of Christianity. The only effect they have upon us is to cause a little verbal excitement. They do not increase our pulse rate, they only raise our word rate. Think of the freshness of the impression made when the School of Christ was young, both by what He said and what He did! Think of having seen Him actually doing those things! Well, it is possible for us to get just as vital and a much more significant impression even of those things done

long ago and recorded in the old and familiar records. We have an opportunity for as fresh an impression and a better understanding.

One of Henry Drummond's best addresses was on the program of Christianity. That is a key-word. Christ's miracles and other doings were not detached and unrelated deeds any more than His teachings were unrelated sayings. He entered into a plan. He had a program and worked to it. Seeing what Jesus did is witnessing the significant unfolding of His life. In the temple when He was a boy He said: "I must be about My Father's business." In the village church He reached back to the old prophecy and applied it to Himself. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke iv. 18-19). Once again He said: "My meat is to do the works of Him that

sent Me." And again, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me." And yet again, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." And at last, "I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do." Early He identified Himself with it. Constantly He kept at it. What a lesson in activity just to watch Him! A lazy man would have been very uncomfortable in that school. And what a sensation it must have been to be with a person who said so many things worth saying and did so many things worth doing! We have seen an occasional person who could talk wisely and act foolishly; many another mighty in word and feeble in deed; an occasional silent man, or man of blundering speech, whose deeds were divine. But everything our Master said was worth saying; there was nothing better to be said. Everything He did was worth doing; there was nothing better to be done. The words and the deeds matched each other. How would you feel, if after a three years' pastorate anybody should say that kind of thing about you? How if everybody should say it?

1. We speak first to-day of the value of the Master's ordinary conduct.

The value of His ordinary conduct has never been sufficiently stated or regarded. The miracles have absorbed attention. Not everything He did was miraculous. He was the carpenter's Son living a normal, true human life. His life was itself a wonder, but not a startling succession of wonders. The boys with whom He grew up had a perfect example of a true and godly childhood, which was not overwhelming and unnatural, but just true and fine and wholesome. Once when He was a dozen years old there was a flash, there in the temple, but only Mary had any unusual insight into that. Thirty years, a longer period than some of you have lived, He lived the best kind of a life that can be imagined, working quietly and honestly at the carpenter's trade. "These were years," says Clarke, "of simple human living as man, citizen, labourer and child of God. In the more public life of His later years He is still a man, a friend, a member of His nation mingling with men in the ordinary relations of life."

And this must have been the first impression He made. We get the point of contact with His life, not at the point of His extraordinary, but at the point of His ordinary living. There was no other way. During all the years He went around doing good. He went about not doing wonders all the time, but doing good all the time, and that was a wonder itself. A certain famous teacher in one of our colleges has died within a few years. The last time I visited the college they told me that he visited all the sick, all the troubled, all the poor in the community, being the most useful man in the small town, and that he seemed to think it belonged to him as a teacher of Greek to do such things. Our Master was always like that. He evidently meant it to be so. It was not an accident nor an incident in His life. Like good teaching and other things it was the very essence of His life. His daily life was rich in deeds of mercy and love.

“Thy litanies, sweet offices
Of love and gratitude;
Thy sacramental liturgies
The joy of doing good.”

The striking and exceptional incidents, those that are by name and specific account in the record, rather blind us to the rest. Those first pupils must have been mightily impressed with the example of one who could do such things as His ordinary deeds and who would do such things right along. The power to raise the dead He did not often exercise. It would be rather a dangerous power to put into our clumsy hands. But the power to comfort, to cheer, to love, to help day by day, He exercised all the time. And that power He freely transmits. It is vastly better than the other both for all His uses and for ours.

We have a craving to do the extraordinary, the wonderful, but the ability to do the ordinary is much more useful. We forget the climax in the old words: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Mounting up on wings like eagles is an experience that is, at best, only occasional as yet. Running

is not a common habit with men and women. Walking is still the ordinary method of locomotion. Here is the true climax : that contact with God is worth while in the common experiences and needs of man. Grace is not valuable chiefly for its help in life's occasional and unusual hours. Divine occasionalism is not so rich as divine constancy.

Christ's habit of going about doing good, teaching men how "to live well with one another according to Christ," making His daily life a ministry, this has been overlooked or exalted to the miraculous. What would Jesus do? What did Jesus do? He helped people and helped them all the time. It was said of a certain woman, "She hath done what she could." The words apply to Jesus: "He did what He could do." He found an old doctrine of election which had once been right and had become sadly wrong. He turned it right side up again, and interpreted election not in terms of privilege but in terms of service. He illustrated it, not by putting on a white tie or a

scholar's gown and talking eloquently about it, but by helping His neighbours in many a gracious act. He found a worn-out doctrine of the Messiah and restored it to its true significance. He was defining the Messiah in that message to John. The Messiah will bring good news to the needy and will perform good deeds for the needy. The Messianic man will do it again. Jesus was not a parlour socialist nor a reformer from the chair nor a doctrinaire. He defined brotherhood and Messiahship in terms of personal activity and service.

2. We speak in the second place of the significance of His extraordinary doings.

These are usually called miracles, though He called them signs, which is a much better word. Calling them miracles sets them apart in a class by themselves for special treatment. It pretty nearly requires an act of violence to get miracles where they can touch common life. It has been a loss that the study of them has been so academic, so philosophical, so evidential. We have largely lost sight of their suggestiveness to

ministering men, their pedagogical value in a world needing such lessons from such deeds. The talk about the possibility of eliminating the miracles from the record and still leaving all that is essential goes wide of the mark. Their chief value is not evidential but illustrative and suggestive. The world would be infinitely poorer with them torn from the record, even if they could be taken out. Life is not all on a dead level, and must not be reduced to utter commonplace. We are not trying to save Jesus, we are trying to save life. And a Messiah must not be reduced to a talking prophet, doing a few good, easy things. For we have some hard things to do yet, as hard as anything He ever did. An insufficient Messiah is an intolerable Messiah. His works have vital meaning for us. For our faith is not in miracle but in Christ, and the tearing of miracle out of the record does not add to our faith in Him, say what men will. The evidential value of the miracles does not depend upon their incongruity with the order of nature, but upon their perfect con-

gruity with the character of Christ and His aims.

Now it is no part of our program to discuss the question of the historicity of the miracles. That would carry us too far afield. There are two tendencies with great names behind each. One tendency goes to the elimination or at least the reduction of the miraculous. The other goes straight the other way. Take these sentences from Sunday: "The evidence for all these miracles (in the Gospels) generally speaking is strong. The evidence for all the different classes is equally strong. The historian who tries to construct a reasoned picture of Christ finds that he cannot dispense with miracles." Thus also Forrest: "As regards mere testimony we have more ancient evidence for His miracles than for many of His sayings." And from Illingworth I quote another word: "They are so essentially a part of the character depicted in the Gospels that without them that character would entirely disappear. They flow naturally from a Person, who, despite His obvious humanity, impresses

us throughout as being at home in two worlds. We cannot separate the wonderful life, or the wonderful teaching from the wonderful works." "The process of thought and research, both theological and scientific, has led to a position where belief in the actuality, in the career of Jesus, of those remarkable activities and manifestations summed up under the comprehensive and popular term 'miracle,' is made possible if not inevitable. The prevailing negative attitude of science shows signs of being abandoned in view of enlarging understanding of the possibilities both in Matter and in Spirit, and theology is coming to see that the miraculous events recorded of Him who was the Son of God and the Regenerator of the Race must not be conceived of as in any sense or degree a violation of the order of Nature; and that viewed in this way they become, instead of difficulties and stumbling-blocks in the way of faith, some of its most convincing reinforcements. It is scarcely too much to affirm that a belief in these occurrences as vital parts of the Christian

revelation is rising, compared with which all previous belief is feeble and superficial. Without being unduly optimistic, we may anticipate that the 'ages of faith' in every department of Christian truth, and not least in that of miracle, are yet to come. This consummation is being prepared for in modern conceptions of the Order of Nature, of Human Personality, and of the Divine Being."

It is for us to consider them from our practical position as students in the School of Christ. I think they will seem to us much more significant as exhibitions of truth and purpose and power than simply as exhibitions of power. They look extraordinary to us because we cannot do them. Apparently our Master did not regard them as extraordinary at all. Nor were they for Him. The law of cause and effect does not seem to be set aside when He does an unusual thing. Indeed, He did not think wonders the most important things He did. Some mathematical geniuses can do marvellous sums to the amazement of everybody. One

of them once told me that he did not set great store by his ability to do those prodigious sums. He regarded the right use of mathematics in life's ordinary transactions as far more valuable.

Jesus never would conduct an exhibition miracle. "He imposed upon Himself strict restraint in the use of His supernatural powers." As near an approach as any was when He said, "But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath authority on earth to forgive sins He said to the sick of the palsy, 'Arise, take up your bed and go home'" ; but that was chiefly an exhibition of true forgiving power ; an exhibition of God's grace rather than of anything else. It was related chiefly not to palsy but to forgiveness. Everything He did was done with reference to His whole program. It sprung from His heart and bore upon His mission. He was not seeking to accredit Himself as one seals a document. He was seeking to reveal Himself. "These works were expressions of character as much as they were evidences of power ; they were

works of love before they were works or signs of power." "These were divine things done in a world where not many such things were being done." He could do things and He did them. He wanted men to know that God cared for them. Doing things for them was one way of showing them that this was so. So He matched up His declarations with His deeds. And the miracles like the parables became revelations of the character and thought of God. Somebody has said that the parables were miracles of utterance and the miracles parables of action. That sounds well. It sounds so fine that I suspect it of being too fine. But men learn what a teacher is from what he does as from what he says. Here was one claiming to have come from God. Some ears were too dull to hear what He had to say. His words fell upon fat hearts. So like an old time professor of chemistry or physics He would make His appeal through the eye. He must reach men. They must be made aware of God, and that God was with Him. The miracles show it, which is vastly better than simply attesting it.

And they all show what we must think of Christ. And they were all wrought "for the transformation of man's lot, man's aims, man's hopes and man's destiny." They harmed no person; they blessed all. They taught that God is good; they certified that men could trust God. Students in the School of Christ, have you learned, are you learning, from what He did and how He did it, how the ordinary and extraordinary deed alike bear on the chance that God will get with men? Everything was part of Christ's program, that He might bring men to God. That is worth our learning. Somehow our large anxiety about the laws of nature seems rather disproportionate. Apparently some men would rather save a law of nature than a human life. The laws of nature He never broke, the ordinary course of nature He constantly broke into. So do we. And we are always glad when we can make some new combination and obtain some new control which makes life richer.

But the most astonishing thing about this Master of ours is that He apparently never

uses any of His supernatural power for Himself. He makes no bread for Himself in the wilderness when He is hungry. He makes bread in quantities in the desert for the hungry multitudes. He broke into the course of nature again and again, but always to help somebody else than Himself. The sight of actual need could always secure superhuman sympathy and assistance from Him. It is not so much the exercise of power that proves Him a supernatural person, as it is the constant display of unselfishness, compassion, mercy and love in all that He did. How long must we study Him in His activities? Until we are moved by the same motive and spirit. And it will appal us after this to hear Him saying those great words: "Greater works than these shall ye do." But that is just like a true teacher. He always wants his true pupil to excel and surpass him in life and achievement. Thus the world moves forward.

He came into a world largely "like our own, though like with a difference. Spiritual concern had somewhat evaporated. People were living on secular levels, bounded by

secular horizons." The power of an endless life was not felt. Pleasure and material good, which are both good, were in danger of being thought the chief good. Religion was an inheritance and a respectability, a thing of race and descent. Into this condition He brought His great personality; into it He flung His vital ideas; upon it He brought to bear His perfect program. There you have three mighty terms: the man, the truth, the program; the personality, the ideas, the plan; or to limit it a little, the preacher, his theology, his purpose. We have learned, or shall learn, in this School that the truth of Christ matched the character of Christ. How else could we speak of the "truth as it is in Jesus"? How else could He say "I am the truth"? Many men have felt that to be great men and to have mighty truth would insure supreme influence and usefulness. But this is to overlook that other feature, that essential feature, the activity. Here was Jesus who had only a short time at His disposal. What a temptation to hurry and splutter and spoil things by haste! But how

sanely He entered into His program, and how steadily He held to it! Many men have good plans which they readily abandon, or stupid plans to which they stubbornly adhere, or no plans at all. These make great use of two words: One, "Do with your might what your hand finds to do," without any great concern to see that it has any bearing upon life's reasoned plan. The other is that over-worked quotation concerning the reinforcements that had come up during a battle: "Go in anywhere, there is lovely fighting all along the line." Somewhere on that line there was a place which was better than any other place for these reinforcements to go in.

Now watch our Master. We are here today to see what He did and proposed. They tried to make Him change His plans, to force Him to be a King, but He was not a victim to their whims, to every wind that blew, because He was following a program of His own too important to be abandoned. Remember that He took such men as He had, and worked with them. From one point of view I think He did not have a chance with

these men. Modern preachers have such men as those in mind when they complain that they can do nothing because they have no material to work with. He worked in such circumstances as surrounded Him. The towns were not always big or the environment favourable, but He did the best He could with what He found. He tied up to Himself what there was that was good. He found some vitality. He attached Himself to that. Some of it was going in the wrong direction. He changed its direction and kept it going. He did not seek the weak and passive souls who would be readily subject to His influence, and worth nothing even under such influence. Many of us do. He did not let all the strong men spend themselves on politics, social reforms and the like. He had and used the magnetic touch which we need, which laid hold of some of the strongest characters for the primary, not the secondary or subsidiary usefulness. He chose those best personalities and bound them to Him. "One man is not as good as another." One man is just as worth saving

as another, but not worth as much when saved. Some men are worth next to nothing for the kingdom, some are worth millions, some, as Mr. Ruskin says, are "worth having." He went to the depths of these men. He did not try to "make religion cheap in the effort to make it interesting." The ablest men turn away from those who have no revealing message from God and no immortal appeal to their deepest souls. He grasped these men at their best, seized them at their strongest points, worked along the line of their faculties and attached them to Himself with a deathless devotion. He put courage into them. He transformed them. He inspired them with the wisdom of His example and the passion of His plans. He attached their talents and capacities to His. He made them over, took them into training, put them through an apprenticeship, and at last called them friends and left His kingdom in their hands.

He left them with the passion of His own example to stimulate and inspire them. "My Father worketh, I work." This spectacle is

contagious. It sets one on fire. It is like getting on the inside of the wisest, the best and the most active man you know. The only comfort a lazy man or an aimless one can have in life is in keeping away from Jesus Christ. Laziness and aimlessness cannot live close to Him. A French critic of Rousseau declares that the deepest spring of action in us is the sight of action in another. The spectacle of effort awakens and sustains our own effort. It is inspiring to watch Him. He does not expend power by His activities. That is the way of an ordinary man. Jesus gathers power. He does not exhaust Himself by doing. Only a small man does that. He strengthens Himself and awakens others by activity.

And He is so lavish in the things He does. We are so prudent and careful. The parable of the Sower describes the miracle of His life. He went forth to sow and He sowed. He knew that "in great enterprises economy spells ruin and failure. To check expenditure is to trip up success." When the sowing begins you cannot stop to count or save

wheat. He flung economy to the winds. It was not careful and prudent ; perhaps it was not quite scientific. But Charles Kingsley called prudence "a nasty little virtue." This lavishness of our Master appeals to us as we watch it. He had the grand passion for men. "He taught the multitudes," and "He healed them all."

Now let us press our study a little more closely into the folds of human life, individual, social and general. The program of Jesus was not a program of speeches nor exhibitions, but a program of life. Nothing could divert Him from that.

Here we must proceed from the individual to the general, though we have some general directions and declarations to begin with. "He shall save His people." The good tidings of great joy shall be "to all people." The world view gets before us early. He entered into that plan. His own last words sound like a reaffirmation of the angel message. But He began with individuals. He worked with them all the time. He pressed them to share His large conception. The

kingdom is a big term, and Peter is a somewhat turbulent and difficult person. To tie that big term up to one man ; to relate that one man to the big term ; that is the double problem. We talk about individual work for individuals and some of our talk is very wise and some of it exceedingly foolish. The individual idea nowhere stands alone, either in the teaching or in the method of our Master. No one else ever did individual work so well, but it was so well done partly because it did not stop with being individual. You have the feeling all the time that every personal movement is taking place in the atmosphere of the universal, just as in the best school the training of the best scholar seems to be related to the training of the whole world. That makes the individual case so full of meaning.

Now just what did our Master evidently intend to do with a man, or for a man, or in a man? We are here, as those early ones were, with Him to see what He did and proposed. He did things upon character and upon life. He was not a worker upon nature

chiefly but upon humanity. We are both astonished and encouraged that He could do and did do so much in so short a time, with such material. Maybe He can make something out of us. I am always hopeful while studying this subject—but never too hopeful.

Evidently He intended to take full possession of a man. He captured such as John and James and Matthew at every point. It is wise to watch this pretty carefully. The seizing of the emotions is not enough. The control of the thought is not sufficient. I recite a lot of words here and ask you to recall how our Master took possession of men at every one of these points, at every one of these and more. Hear them: Interests, emotions, thoughts, affections, wills, energies, relations, imagination, imitation and emulation. He made His appeal to the whole man, for He wanted to save the whole man. He not only wanted to redeem man from sin, but from smallness and insignificance. No one thing will do that. Prof. William James in his admirable *Talks to Students* declares that "culture and refinement all alone are not

enough to do it. Ideal aspirations are not enough when uncombined with pluck and will. But neither are pluck and will, dogged endurance and insensibility to danger enough when taken all alone. There must be some chemical combination, some sort of fusion of all these principles for a life objectively and thoroughly significant to result." Now some men are utterly blind to the things represented by some of these great terms. They think it enough that religion shall be true ; they do not care that it shall be interesting or agreeable. Indeed, they rather despise those qualities and call them soft and unworthy. Or they think religion a thing of activities and energies and scorn all the effort to make it rational, " to fit it in with the rest of a man's mental furniture." With others it simply lays hold of the emotions and never gets so far as the thoughts, the activities, or the will. And God is very patient with this blundering and shallow process. It is no use to close the school because the students are one-sided and narrow. But all the time, if our Master's example counts for anything,

the Master is trying to save the whole man and, with that in view, is touching life at every one of the points I have named.

It does not quite answer to say that He intended to save life. The reply is true but general and vague. The term salvation needs to be reinterpreted in terms of personal meaning and modern life. What did Jesus Christ propose to do with a man? These are all personal terms. You can answer only by seeing what He did and proposed to do with the men He knew.

Then under the local, the temporary, the individual, the word spoken, the deed done, must be discerned the general, the permanent and the universal. In many of the regions where the Gospel has gone, for example, fig trees are not known, but barren, fruitless lives, with their flimsy excuses exist everywhere. And the curse of the gentle Christ is upon uselessness wherever found.

Every great term has a tendency to sag as the years go. Salvation is such a term. It tends, as all like words do, to lose its full meaning and to become partial and incom-

plete. For many salvation is identical either with an escape or an emotion, a personal experience or a personal privilege, or both. It does not stand at all for a complete transformation of the quality, the relations and the object of life. We are not interested in saving words, but in saving men. What did Christ propose to do with a man? What did He do with men? For what He did when upon earth He must still be doing and trying to do. Once personality influenced, changed, transformed personality. That process must still be going on, though our thought of the Holy Spirit is not always so clear cut and personal as that. We have too largely studied the question of salvation from the angle of sin and too little from the full circle of personality. The painful division between religion and ethics, the long effort to get Christian life into all the regions of a man's life, the wide-spread Christian emotion that does not largely affect either intellect or will—all this surely is suggestive of the tendency of a great term to lose its full quality.

Many analyses have been made of per-

sonality. "It is made up of consciousness, character and will." "The two chief factors are self-consciousness and self-determination." "It has four elements: Consciousness of self, I am; Consciousness of power, I can; Consciousness of obligation, I ought; Consciousness of determination, I will." These do not essentially differ. Jesus Christ was Himself the vital definition of this noble conception. He fully possessed Himself. Men under sin's dominion do not. His self-consciousness was at one with God. "I and My Father are one." The sense of separation is the tragedy of sin. His self-determination was one with the will of God. "I do always the things that please Him." Strife against the will of God is the common human attitude. Now salvation must mean the complete capture, redemption, transformation of personality by personality. Christ opens the way to personality, the way of escape, the way of light, the way of power. "I in them, and thou in Me, that they may be perfected into Me," is the final word. We must use all the familiar old terms in describ-

ing the process, such as forgiveness, new birth, justification, sanctification and the like ; but after all what we seek to discover is not the partial but the total effect of Christ upon a man, of His personality upon a man's personality. And if we must use new and other terms to make that clear let us do so. We are not saving terms but saving men. And a saved life is rather more than a saved feeling or a saved thought. Christian salvation must never mean less than a saved personality.

Salvation as seen in the School of Christ relates to the life from which and the life to which a man is saved. Saved from sin, saved for life—Christ knew at least these two prepositions. His whole Gospel does not lie merely in the great words: "He shall save His people from their sins." It is seen also in the transfer of power and capacity. Men bent on catching fish became fishers of men, men bent on making money kept their old power and used it for treasures in heaven. He seized men at their strongest point, often perverted and astray ; men using

up mighty power for wrong ends. He took the sin out of their power, the wrong out of their purposes, changed their objective, gave strength something adequate to work on, magnified, exalted, crowned, multiplied their master motives and capacities, showed them new possibilities in themselves, until the old life looked bad and the old strength looked good, and by repentance and faith men turned away from evil and entered into the new and living way, and by communion and obedience they walked up on the shining heights of usefulness, redeemed personalities, sin's power broken, sin's guilt forgiven, men come to themselves by Jesus Christ for life's divine-human uses. I have allowed some theological terms to slip in here, but I take them all out as I ask again: "What did Jesus Christ propose to do for an individual man?" There is no place to learn except in the School of Christ. When you have found out the total effect of this perfect personality upon other personalities you will have discovered at once your task and your opportunity.

It is only another step to say that watching this Master of ours to see what He did and proposed, we see that He meant to provide and 'did provide a salvation for all men. For the whole man—that is individual; for all men—that is universal. That He expected all men to be saved is not so clear. A schoolmaster does not expect the entire community to become wise. The provision is made for universal education—that is our glory. Many generations have died and many more will die with many uneducated persons in them—that is our grief and shame. I think the heaviest thing about the Cross was this,—that while our Master was carrying it for all men He knew that many would ignore what He was doing. "I have piped and ye have not danced." "How often I would—and ye would not." Nevertheless, we must hold fast to the perfect work of our Master. It was perfect for each and perfect for all. There are two heresies, both of them bad. One denies the deity of the Person of Christ, the assertion of which is supposed to be a kind of unfailing and in-

fallible test of orthodoxy. The other stoutly asserts the deity of the Person of Christ and denies the divinity of His work. And this latter passes for orthodoxy. It seems to me, a student in Christ's school, to be neither orthodox nor respectable. Into that ancient controversy we need not go again, but silence cannot be construed as an acceptance of either form of the ancient heresy.

What did He propose to do for the relations of men?

He evidently intended to rule and save men not only in themselves but also in their relations. "Christian ethics is the science of living well with one another according to Christ." A new gospel has arisen in our day, the gospel of social redemption. We have a new evangelism, the evangelism of society. The literature of the subject is large and stirring, the movement compelling and fascinating. Men have always been in danger of setting one thing over against another. This new gospel seems so good that some have repudiated the old gospel of individual redemption as outworn and futile. The old

type of evangelist seeks the salvation of the individual, the new the redemption of society. One evangelist emphasizes personal transformation, the other social regeneration. One rejoices, and thinks he rejoices with the angels over one sinner that repents ; the other builds bonfires when one boodler is put in jail. One seeks to get men ready by conversion and sanctification for a far-off kingdom which is yet to come ; the other tries to create now a kingdom for men who are here. And these men work apart rather than together, which shows that neither is a graduate from the School of Christ. Each has been a special student. They stayed just long enough or studied just hard enough to get part of the truth. They have learned the shibboleth which suits them. But our Master had no shibboleths. He did not set one service over against another. It grieved Him that the rich young ruler turned away without entering into life, and it grieved Him that Jerusalem refused to be saved. Indeed, His interview with that young man covers this whole point : Keep the commandments,

which are both personal and social in their bearing ; Sell what you have and give to the poor, which will be good for you and for society ; Come and follow Me. Thus shall you and many enter into life.

I am seeking to interpret the intentions of our Master, and it seems to me that He meant to make both men and society good ; that He meant the redeemed man to help bring in the redeemed society ; and meant a redeemed society to make it easier for men to be redeemed. You must stay in the School of Christ until you have learned the inclusiveness of His mission as you have learned the scope of His teaching. Then you will not set one truth over against another, nor one task over against another. If you do you will only advertise the fact that you have not learned the Master's lesson, or the more shameful fact that you think you can improve His plans. It is doubtful whether there are any electives in the School of Christ : the whole course is required. The elective habit has been overworked. Here everything is essential and

nothing is to be omitted. All the teachings and the whole program must be mastered.

The Master sought to perform two great functions. As one has said :

“There are two great entities in human life—the human soul and the human race—and religion is to save both. The soul is to seek righteousness and eternal life ; the race is to seek righteousness and the kingdom of God.

“The mischief begins when the Church makes herself the end. She does not exist for her own sake ; she is simply a working organization to create the Christian life in individuals and the kingdom of God in human society.”

“The first word of His teaching is character, the second is love.” No one else has ever said *Father* in such filial accents or *brother* in such a fraternal tone. No one else ever laid hold of the roots of character and the relations of life as Jesus did. His program for a man is enough to prove His deity. His program for society surpasses all the wars of all the ages as an appeal to high manhood. Salvation as a simple personal

privilege does not mean much, but salvation for service sets men to walking up the low hill with the Master Himself. The student weeps with Him over Jerusalem, New York and Chicago, and leaps to His side as He starts up the hill with His cross. This makes a program which appeals to big energies and vital capacities.

Men like to do things, and to be related to things that are being done, particularly on a large scale. If you had been young—a man of thirty say—there in the synagogue, dear, sleepy, old synagogue, the day Jesus announced His personal and social program in the words of Isaiah, what would you have done? You would have been on your feet in a minute, with a cheer on your lips, because a man with a program, an appeal to the imagination, an outlet for energy, a scope for activity stood there before you. I can hardly read it or think of it now without wanting to get outdoors, to shout for sheer joy that such a chance exists in the world. Once I saw a drum corps marching down the street, leading a com-

pany of old soldiers to a reunion. The drum corps had seen service. The company had in it a cripple or two and a tattered flag. It is more than thirty years now since I saw those marching heroes but the sensation abides. Something like it comes again as I read these words from the synagogue. But the whole story for us now is that by every avenue He meant to approach a man that He might save the whole man, and that a saved man might give humanity a chance in a saved society.

Somewhere along about this time we discover that He meant to do things for somebody besides the Jews and for some places besides Jewish cities and the Jewish nation. He meant to save a man—that is personal. He meant to save a town—that is social. He meant to save the world—that is what we call missionary. The plan enlarges until it stirs our hearts. Pretty soon you are liable to hear martial music, to see flying banners and to catch the vision of God's majestic march over continents and through centuries. There will be thrones and crowns

and sceptres flashing before your eyes if you will only open them. There will be royal robes and marching armies, new acts of the apostles, nations born in a day, the coming of the kingdom. We are out in the middle of the stream and its waters wash all shores. His plan included a saved man, a saved society, a saved world. Simply reciting those words makes the blood run fast.

How did He mean to accomplish all this? With the minimum of things and the maximum of personality. He did not visit all places to try to do everything Himself. He worked upon men until they were transformed and themselves became transforming forces. Thus does the university extend its power. It takes a raw boy, works him over into a Christian scholar, and sets him down somewhere in the midst of other rawness to repeat the work that has been wrought upon him. Many and precious names rise to our lips as we sit here to-day, men of all schools, but chiefly of the School of Christ. They came in at His word, they companied with Him, hearing what He said, seeing what He

did, learning what He was. The process goes on forever. They are true pupils still.

One final word clamours for utterance. Those first students in that School got a keen sense of our Master's adequacy and sufficiency. Here it sometimes seems to me is our most dangerous and most prevalent modern heresy, a doubt as to whether Christ is able. We know that He is admirable and we rapturously say so, but we have not quite such a sure sense of His almightiness. One of my old teachers always prayed that we might be saved with the power of an endless life. I find myself often repeating the prayer. Our fathers were not always certain of God's goodness, but they never doubted His omnipotence. We have recovered the truth of His kindness and lost somewhat of the sense of His supremacy. Now in Christ's presence let us get again the zest and triumphant note of the early days. The first disciples were poor and not very numerous, but they had the confidence of world-conquest in their blood. Their faith was the victory that overcame worlds.

I cannot go on. Here the case stands: He entered into a commanding program. His ordinary conduct set life flowing afresh in dried up channels. His deeds revealed His character and bore upon His program. He took men and transformed them. We have seen it going on. He touched character with power, brought light into darkness, truth to ignorance, health to sickness, courage to timidity. He took all life into His grasp. He threw His love over all relations. He carried the wide world in His heart and on His cross. And He did it all like a Lord. Rise, let us be going. For there are greater works for us to do.

LECTURE III

CHOSEN BY THE MASTER:
TO LEARN WHAT HE IS

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THE master's truth, the master's program, the master himself: these are the fundamental factors in any curriculum or any true education. Each is essential, as I have tried to make clear, but acquaintance with the teacher is the best thing one gets at school if the teacher happens to be a great personality. The master is always the most important feature of the institution. The teaching may be elaborate and wholesome; all the more important, then, the personality of the teacher. The equipment may be superb; all the more necessary then a man superior to his equipment. The achievements may be unique and unparalleled; all the better then to know the man who can do such things. We are back again to-day to that first thrilling sentence with which we began: "Jesus call-

eth unto Him whom He would and they came unto Him." All the words are emphatic. "Cut any of them and they will bleed." These are personal terms. There is nothing abstract or academic about them. You can see nothing here but persons, one and a dozen. "The Leader is fairest and all are divine."

And this is the most significant thing ever seen on our planet, a group around a Master. Buildings are secondary in education. Courses of study are also secondary. The man is primary. The president of an old and famous college, wishing to put the case in its true order, said: "The principal thing in this world is a fact. The principal fact is a person. The principal person is Jesus Christ." "He appointed twelve that they should be with Him." They will hear what He says and see what He does, but best of all they will learn what He is. They will come to know Him. That will set them into liberty; that will be life eternal. They will find their best definition of Christianity in the person of Christ. This is always true.

We get our best definition of every best thing in terms of life rather than in terms of the dictionary. Men have a passion for phrases. Sometimes men have seemed more concerned to make a correct definition of God than to obtain right acquaintance with Him. Some men have a passion for infallibility of statement. Such things come handy in argument or heresy trials, or when party shibboleths are sorely needed. The desire for such verbal clearness is proper and the ability to frame exact statements is a precious possession. It is valuable in the Church's work of instruction. The making of definitions, creeds and catechisms is of immense service. We owe much to men who have framed such statements as this historic definition of God: "God is a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable, in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth." This is very exact and precise. It is called comprehensive and succinct, and these are desirable qualities in a definition. But what would poor Philip have said or thought if Jesus had used a phrase like that

in that memorable moment when Philip said: "Show us the Father"? How would you like to substitute it for the words: "He that hath seen Me hath seen Him"? Clearer proof you could not have of the statement that we get our best definition in terms of life rather than in terms of the dictionary. That is what makes that group of the one and the twelve so significant. They were getting acquainted with Him. This is what makes the modern movement in theology, the movement towards Christ, so significant and valuable. It is not to get a new phrase on our lips, nor a new shibboleth for our use. The cry "Back to Christ" may become just as empty as any other. The cry "On with Christ" may become just as much a party cry as any other phrase. A good phrase is better than a bad one. A good definition is worth more than a poor one, but in life a phrase from which the personal quality has gone is no longer good. The person must be in the statement or it has become a dead statement. It is the living Christ who keeps the doctrine of Christ a living doctrine, His

truth a living truth. "The words that I speak, they are spirit, they are life," but they are spirit and life not alone because they are correct words, but also because He is evermore in them. St. Paul knew what he was about when he exhorted young Timothy to "Hold the pattern of sound words, which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. i. 13). We are just as liable to fall under the dominion of a catchword as anybody; just as liable as any one to fancy that the knowledge of a phrase is equivalent to an acquaintance with a person, or that the repetition of the phrase indicates such acquaintance. And this is the real value in the cry "Back to Christ," that it may actually vitalize our truth about Christ by the bringing of Christ into our truth. It takes a person to keep a phrase alive. In Christianity this is peculiarly true. Personality is at a premium here. The relation of Christ's person to what He said and what He did is manifestly unique. We have felt that all along. The place of His own person in the body of His doctrines and His deeds

is of prime consequence. A lot of those things He said cannot be understood unless we also understand Him. He is not only the centre and life of His own teaching, He is the key to it. You cannot take Him out and leave His teaching. We must know Him. We cannot graduate into highest usefulness until we do.

Now how shall we arrive at this knowledge of Him? How is an acquaintance with Christ to be obtained? The classic New Testament passage is the one found in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew. The scene is Cæsarea Philippi, but it might as well be Nashville or Chicago. His public ministry was somewhat more than a year old. He wanted to know how far the public had gone towards understanding Him. He wanted also to know how well His disciples understood Him. Had they caught in any measure the secret of their Master's own nature? So He asks first: "Who do *men* say that I am?" You know the confused, helpless replies. "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, others Jeremiah." Others, not to be caught

by a definite answer, look wise as folks do when about to take refuge in vagueness and generalities, and say that "He is one of the prophets." This is the usual result when *they*, the vast, uninformed *they*, give their opinions out of their ignorance. Opinions of course they had to have, whether they had any adequate information or not. That is what Berkeley said: "Few men will think; all men will have opinions." And this confusion is the natural product. It all sounds so modern that it must have come from the daily papers rather than from Matthew's old record.

If now the men whom He had appointed to be with Him do not make better answer than this He may well despair. For the one thing a teacher cannot endure is that his disciples shall not understand him. If our Master was ever anxious I fancy it must have been when He asked His disciples what they thought and waited to see whether they had at all grasped the meaning of His life and the significance of His person. Peter does not always appear to good advantage. His

remarks on the Mount of Transfiguration and on some other occasions were rather unhappy. But he has a very high average. He could risk his reputation on his reply at Cæsarea Philippi and his address at Pentecost. Indeed, those two utterances would float a good deal of talk which was not in itself up to their own level. What do you think the Master's emotions were when for himself and the rest Peter burst out with that passionate and adoring cry, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"? It is a clear note in the general uncertainty. Life answers back to life. Life has laid hold of the truth in life. The fisherman has seized the truth as it is in Jesus. The rock is under his feet, the rock for men, the rock for the Church. It is all there : the person confessed because apprehended ; the person confessing what by experience he had found out ; the personal confession of person by person, not as the condition of getting in but as the result of being in the School of Christ. How had Peter arrived at that? How had the crowd missed it? He struck the centre. They had

struck, or only approached, the edge. Of course I know the familiar reply. It is already on your lips: "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto you, but My Father which is in heaven." But there is no magic and not much mystery in that statement. It is the kind of a statement which is easily translated into experience. It is not up in the air, but on the ground where men are. It means just this: The way to truth is the way of life. God has made known what His Son is to the men who have been living with Him, listening to Him, watching Him, obeying Him, serving Him as occasion offered, coming slowly to love Him. "His Messiahship was not a declaration on His part but a discovery on theirs, an inference to which, under the illumination of the spirit they were inevitably driven by what they had experienced in His presence." This accurate knowledge is obtained not by speculation at a distance nor controversy about Him nor wonder while apart from Him. Accurate knowledge of Him is obtained by living with Him. The true view of Christ is

reserved for those and given to those most devoted and most susceptible. Life with Christ is the basis of such a revelation of Christ. They might have asked at that point, "Why is it, or how is it, that Thou dost manifest Thyself unto us and not unto the world?" The saint obtains the clear vision denied to others. These men, being purified in heart, saw what Jesus was. It was not the result of intellectual superiority. This accurate insight did not depend upon an argument, it rested upon an experience. This discernment of who and what the Son of Man was, was not required of them at the entrance to the School of Christ. They did not get in because they knew; they came to know in consequence of being in and of being obedient. The possession of this knowledge is not an entrance requirement; it is a requirement for graduation. "This knowledge," a recent writer declares truly, "comes in virtue of the impression made on us by all that He is in the soul's private life, by what we learn from day to day of His personality, His words, His deeds, that we are brought to confess Him as

the Son of God. That is to say this doctrine is not the porch through which we must first pass as we enter the temple of Christian discipleship ; it may rather be the last and holiest shrine to which loyal obedience and quickened insight soon or late will lead."

These men, Peter chief among them, lived themselves into this doctrine. This royal doctrine, this transcendent insight came to men who were living in the royal way, keeping daily step with the best they knew. God has no disclosures to others. He is silent to them. For those who stand aloof Jesus is Elijah or the Baptist or one of the prophets. These dwell in the din and jargon. These are spoken of as "they" or "some." Their opinions have that kind of value. The others join in the clear and adoring confession. Life with Jesus gets the vision of the truth about Jesus.

I have called this the classic episode, not that it gives a complete estimate of what Jesus was, but that it indicates the way of arriving at a true estimate. It is essentially Baconian, Wesleyan and scientific. Cole-

ridge said : " If you want to be persuaded of the truth of Christianity try it." If you want to know what Jesus was live with Him.

"First seek the Saviour out, and dwell
Beneath the shadow of His roof,
Till thou hast scanned His features well
And known Him for the Christ by proof :
Such proof as they are sure to find
Who spend with Him their happy days,
Clean hands and a self-ruling mind
Ever in tune for love and praise.
Then potent with the spell of Heaven,
Go and thine erring brother gain.
Entice him home to be forgiven
'Till he too sees his Saviour plain."

—*Keble, Christian Year.*

Those first men knew Christ from living with Him, hearing what He said and seeing what He did. Part of it they wrote down,—only a small part of it, we may well believe. But just as their creed came out of their companionship, so their records grew out of their life with Jesus. John thought his experiences and fellowships over a little longer and a good deal more intensely than the others, but his story when written came

out of his experience. That is why we can get back through the records concerning Jesus to a vital acquaintance with Jesus. The experience became a record. Thus does life always tend to become literature. Then through the record later generations get back into the life. Thus does holy literature render its true and noble service to life. Those frank, unaffected, engaging records are infinitely precious to us for this double reason,—that they record so perfectly the life of Jesus and His disciples and keep open for men a perpetual way to acquaintance with Jesus.

The early problem has changed somewhat for us. It would seem easy enough to become acquainted with Jesus when the disciples had the chance to be with Him daily. No such opportunity is ours as was theirs. We must somehow solve the difficult problem of “making an historic personality a real personality.” His personality revealed itself and its qualities in time and place. How now can this person once living in time and place be made a vital fact, the supreme fact in the religious life of to-day? The vast

modern effort to discover Jesus as He lived and moved in His historic setting has not added to the ease of clear and simple faith. How can the Christ of history become the Christ of experience? We must somehow come to know Him, not simply to know about Him. The problem just referred to does not exist at all for some, and for others the solution varies. A recent very fresh volume of lectures points out that F. W. Newman simply and completely "denied that the personality of Christ had any significance for his religious life. . . . Religion for him was a direct communion between God and the soul unmediated by any historic medium." Hegel "dissolved the personality of Christ into the great idea that He embodied self-sacrifice." Dale and others assume an attitude of independence of and indifference to all historical and literary criticism.

But all this seems unsatisfactory. The Christ of experience cannot last long, would not have lasted so long, but for the historical Christ. The Christ idea is permanent only because of the Christ fact. The beauty of

the idea will not save it. Nothing will save it, except the fact itself. In all ages the problem is the same—the problem of really knowing Him. How can one come to have such assurance as Horace Bushnell's when he said: "I know Jesus Christ better, far better, than I know any man in Hartford . . . and I think if He came along this way He would arrest Himself and say, 'Here's a man I know.' "

Or how can we repeat the experience of Phillips Brooks: "All experience comes to be but more and more the pressure of His (Christ's) life on ours. It cannot come by one flash of light, or one convulsive event. It comes without haste and without rest in this perpetual living of our life with Him. And all our history, of inner and outer life, of the changes of circumstances, or the changes of thought, gets its meaning and value from this constantly growing relation to Christ. I cannot tell you how personal this grows to me. He is here. He knows me and I know Him. It is no figure of speech. It is the reallest thing in the world.

And every day makes it realler. And one wonders with delight what it will grow to as the years go on"? Or how may we still say: "Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ"? Or how may we still say: "I know Him"?

In this study of ours to-day permit me to say that we can come to a real acquaintance with Christ only by a union of several processes. One way alone will not bring it about. We must become acquainted with Him through His open and manifest methods, through His clearly revealed spirit, through His character as disclosed by Himself, and particularly through the process of living with Him and living like Him.

The study of the methods of Jesus is in its first stages disappointing. We are chiefly impressed at the outset with the meagreness of the materials for our guidance in any of life's details. Suppose a modern pastor goes to the Gospels to study the methods of Jesus. His first experience will dishearten him. There is almost no light at all on the details of our modern pastoral problems.

How many hours daily did He study? How many hours did He call? How did He conduct a meeting? How did He manage a church? Or how was He managed by one? City pastors and country pastors alike look in vain for a detailed plan which will save them the trouble of making one. Indeed a pastor in our modern sense He was not at all. He had no regular congregation, no stated hours for public services, no conference relations, no visiting list, no hours for study, no hours for calling. In short, He had in His life none of the outstanding features of a modern pastor's life. He was not an evangelist in our modern sense of that term. He held nothing like special meetings with their altars, their stirring music, their exhortations, their urgent appeals, their mothers' meetings, men's meetings and children's meetings, their cards and conversions, their counting of converts. He came much nearer to our modern conception of a teacher than of either a pastor or an evangelist. There was nothing in the externals of His life in common with the life

of a modern bishop, presiding elder, editor, secretary or college president. It would be an affectation for any one of us to wear sandals or seamless robes because He did.

Is there, then, no significance in the study of His methods? Much, every way. First we shall learn that good methods are vastly better than bad ones, that methods are not automatic; that the knowledge of another's methods will not enable us to repeat another's work or achievements; that there is a fatal bondage to methods into which bondage many men readily fall; and that there is no hard and fast way of doing a thing and that the main thing is to do it. The routine of life is wholly lacking in Christ, the vitalities and realities are all present. The religious mechanic is either disappointed in Jesus or misuses Him. The mechanic has consummate skill in missing the essence of a situation and discovering only its accidents. He would lay great stress upon the well, the wayside, the time of day, the distance from the city and all that. He would miss the supreme thing which is that two personalities

get together and the accidents of their meeting are all made to minister to its outcome. The outcome is the principal thing. Let us not be in the least discouraged that so much is lacking; let us be glad that so much is present.

In Phillips Brooks' lecture on biography as originally delivered to a small group of men he pointed out the highest service that one person could render to another in terms like these: One person is a chemical substance which if lighted would burn blue, another would burn red, another white. The value of a biography is to set you on fire so you will burn whatever your colour. The change of substance is another question. Many a man has consumed himself trying to work out the mechanics of Jesus' method and has failed utterly to acquire the inspiring passion of Jesus to do things by any fair method. The life has not been lighted.

I am compelled at this point to make a confession. When I began the preparatory study for this course of addresses I had in mind for this one chiefly the methods of

Jesus' activities. These I meant to work out as well as possible. But the more I studied the theme the more clear became the conviction that we are over-inclined, I am over-inclined, to emphasize the methods of a man's activities. I made a careful outline at one stage of the preparation and tried to work it out on the original plan. It would not work out. The methods of Christ's activities, of any great man's activities, are important, but they are not to be studied apart from the methods of His life. We must know how He did what He did, but we must chiefly know how He was what He was. How men prepare their sermons is a proper question. But it is not quite so searching as the question how they come to be, and how they continue to be, the kind of men that can make such sermons by any process. Perhaps we can keep the distinction clearly before us by the use of the two phrases: (1) The methods of the life and (2) the methods of the activities.

What do we mean by the methods of our Master's life? There are really only two supreme questions for personality. One is

the question of meeting evil, the other the question of making life right and keeping it right. They are actually only one question in their personal working and outcome. They might be stated in another way thus: The method of meeting temptation and the method of maintaining the life of God in the soul. These are the deepest interests in a man's life. You can learn all the details of our noble calling, or any noble calling, and still fail. You can master the methods of our Master's activities, personal and social, and still utterly fail. The secrets of being lie deeper than the secrets of the trade. The methods of the life lie under and behind the methods of the activity. "In Him was life and the life was the light of men."

And this life of our Master is especially luminous in these two essential particulars. Temptation plays a very large part in the life of every man, every good man as well as every bad one. It played a large part in the life of Jesus. The man with a noble mission, a holy purpose and a lofty character, meets a peculiar set of temptations which assail him

at the point of his holy purpose. Jesus did not escape that test though He taught us to pray that we might be delivered. Perhaps the familiar account of what we call the temptation will open the subject to us though it will not exhaust it. That episode did not end our Master's conflict with evil. "The enemy was beaten then but not destroyed."

We need not describe it again. Nor is it necessary to consider the meaning of the experience of Christ on the mountain of temptation for the man in the street, struggling with vulgar evil; nor the outworn question of the reality of Christ's temptation; nor that other even more outworn question of the literalness of it; nor the confusing, hair-splitting distinction between the place of the divine and human in Him during the fierce struggle. It is enough to say that there are in the story lessons for the man in the street, but they lie to one side of our purpose; that the life of our Master became involved at the point of His noble mission and high purpose; and that neither for Him nor for any other

soul does the divine so shield the human as to make temptation a mimic warfare. Such a conflict is inherent in any life consecrated to supreme tasks ; and the holier the life and purpose the more inevitable the struggle.

Our concern is with the story of Christ's temptation as its various features bear upon His life-work and upon His personality as the basis of that work ; and all this as illuminating for us these two fundamental questions : how to keep life from evil and how to keep life strong and effective. He had been baptized. He had given Himself to His high task. His mission and life stretched out before Him as do ours. He like us must take up His program and work it out. He like us must do God's will, must tell men the truth of God, must rid the world of evil, must interpret God to men, must sanctify the world in truth. For all this He like us must keep Himself fit. He like us must offer Himself up. At His baptism He heard the words, "Thou art My Son." His course is ruined if by any act or failure of His He ever ceases to hear those words. There at the

start and all through, for Him as for us, three powerful allurements present themselves. If He or we shall walk steadily at these points, all of them, we shall know what moral victory means. These are the questions: How will He use divine power? How will He use divine promises? How will He win the world? A selfish use of divine power, a reckless test of divine promises, an attempt to win the world by going over to it—at any one of these points a man, a good man even, may break. Or, as another has put it, "Here the question arose what kind of a Messiah He would be. Will He be a spectacular Messiah, a worldly Messiah, or a selfish Messiah?" That fairly states the issue. If He had broken at any point we should have had no Messiah at all. At some one of these points most men do break. To resume our school figure, it would not be easy for any of us to pass an examination on these three questions. Few men of great power keep the current of their power always turned upon their work and never upon their advantage. There are many who ably and well do their

work, but who always expect personal gain to come as a by-product. Jesus would have spoiled His whole program by the use of His own great power for His own advantage. But this is the test: Why go hungry when you can make bread? Why stay in this obscure, uncomfortable place when you have the power to improve your condition? But the current is sure to be cut off at last if one turns it in the wrong direction. If Christ goes to using His divine power for making bread for Himself even when He is hungry, He will lose the power to make bread for the multitudes when they are hungry. The divine power in one's hand must be turned always upon one's task, never upon one's benefit.

So with the next step in the story. An ambassador is tempted to make a display of his relation to the government behind him. Has it not promised to protect him in a foreign land? Therefore he will cast himself down from the tower some day just to show what his government can do for him. Incidentally the bystanders will gain a great

impression of him and of his confidence. Does he not owe it to his government, especially when challenged, to prove that its promises are good? Will not one dramatic episode bring tremendous results? Will not a spectacular display of faith be a fine thing for the kingdom? In Christ's case it will give God such a chance to make good His word and to show how He can and will take care of His Son. Let us answer Tyndall's challenge to the prayer test. It will be an excellent advertisement. Hardly. The government promises to protect its ambassador in doing his duty. The promise and assistance of God are for those, including Christ, who are in the line of duty. The promises do not cover advertising, even for the government. God does not care for the advertising even of His promises. Pretty soon the angels will come and minister to this tempted Master, but if He goes to presuming and parading, to making vulgar display of His relations, reckless and unwarranted use of God's promises the angels will be very scarce. The promises are for use, not

for display. We will pray for the sick but not to show the power of our prayers. The best advertisement of the value of God's promises is their power to bear life's weight. Men are always tempted to make a professional use of God's promises. The method of our Master was to make only a vital use of them. Never did He try one for the sake of testing it. In the hour of need He never hesitated to throw His entire weight upon God's word. He made no experiments, He failed in no duty. He trusted God by walking in the path of obedience. He did not tempt God by walking in the path of display. He depended on the angels to help Him while He did His duty, and only when doing it.

At these two essential points we get much light,—use of power, relation to God's promises. It is good to be in Christ's School to learn such lessons. There is still a third. The drama is complete. Every great personality with a large plan of life will pass through these three experiences. These are the essential categories. The Redeemer must go through like the rest. What power

have I and how shall I use it? Can I depend upon God? How shall I fulfill my mission? The nobler one's personality, the higher one's relations, the loftier one's mission, the more certain and powerful the temptations are. Tested at the point of power, at the point of faith, at the point of mission, every noble personality will be. Men are not attacked simply at their weak points. These are not simply shrewd and cunning tactics of the Evil One. This is magnificent strategy. In the fight for character these three points must be captured or kept. We have briefly studied two of them. The third raises the question of our Master's dearest wish and its fulfillment. He came to win the world back to God. To this end everything was done and endured. Here now is a short cut, an easy way. He can win the world by going over to it, or by making an alliance with it. That plan will assure success, and it will avoid a hard and toilsome schedule. This is wise and prudent. The other is heroic and Quixotic. This is practical and rational. The other is visionary and academic. Surely

if He can win the world by this sensible alliance it will be well. Why make it so hard when it can be so easy and so sure? One of the ablest religious journals of our day thus states the case: "As Jesus surveyed the world in which ascendancy was to be won for God, He could not but see what a tremendous power was wielded in it by evil. It had enormous resources at its disposal, it had made its own vast regions of human life which belonged of right to God and His Christ. What was to be done with it? If it were directly challenged, it could offer an incalculable and merciless resistance; was there no way round? Was it not possible to make use of evil somehow? Was there not some craft or policy by which the loan of it might be taken for a time? by which its right to exist, temporarily of course and under conditions, might be recognized, so that the Son of God might profit by it till it became practicable for Him to do without it? Jesus saw clearly what this meant, and in seeing it He overcame the Temptation in it. It was Satan boasting of his power, and offer-

ing it to Him on terms which meant the complete frustration of His calling from the start. In the passion with which Jesus repels this temptation—Get thee behind Me, Satan—we seem to hear Him saying to Himself what He says to us all: What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose himself?"

This atmosphere is not ancient but modern. We seem to be reading the thoughts of the American church and its ministry. This is the temptation of our age,—to win the world at home and abroad by going over to it, making an alliance with it. Students in the School of Christ, do you see? If our Master fails here we shall have no further interest in His methods or His work. He cannot save the world if He makes this bad alliance. He cannot win the world by going over to it. He must not misuse the divine power. He must not misuse the divine promises. He must not forsake the divine plan for winning the world. No evil spot must touch that or any of it anywhere. One flaw, one slip, one compromise will spoil

it all. Oh, angels of God, watch Him and watch us all that we fail not at any of these points, and guide us into the method of His life in His conflict with evil. The methods of His activities will be useless in our hands if we have not learned this method of His life.

This has had to do with keeping life from evil. Now take the other side of His life. What was His method of maintaining His life in those positive qualities that make for effectiveness? How did He keep His life strong and fit? What can we learn from Him in this vital matter? Two or three things certainly. First, that the maintenance of such a life requires attention. Life does not keep itself up to tone without effort. The life of Jesus Himself would have run down if He had just let it go. Second, being busy even in doing good will not keep the tides of life running full and strong. Being busy has a way of exhausting the tides. A watch runs down keeping time, though keeping time is its business. Many a man wonders why he is so ineffective when he tries so hard to do good. His hands are busy but empty.

He has plenty of activities but not much life. He has only learned part of the method of Jesus. That method embraced abstinence from evil, maintenance of excellence and doing of work. At the risk of being tiresome I repeat the distinction between His life methods and His working methods; or rather I emphasize these life methods as fundamental to the methods of His activities. How, then, did He keep His life strong and fit? This too is an open secret. Why will we persist in making the personal life of Jesus so unreal? Why do we always hold it away from us by one or two removes? We admit the propriety of His baptism, for example, but do not attach to it much significance for Him. Yet in that conformity to the higher ritual He heard those words and had that experience without which He could not have begun His work. That day the Spirit descended upon Him, and that day He heard the words, "Thou art My Son. In Thee I am well pleased." It was more than an official recognition, a formal entrance to His career. It had personal significance. Now its sug-

gestive value for us lies in this, that our Master used all those means to raise and keep His life to the highest levels that belong to the real spiritual history of the race. And He did this not as a simple show, or merely to set us an example. He did it because it was worth doing for His own life's sake. It becomes an example because of its use in His life.

So with the place of prayer in His life. We need prayer very much and use it very little. We are prone to think He needed it very little and used it very much. But surely here again we are mistaken. Remember the tendency of life, the tendency of even the best life to run down. Nobody knew this as well as Jesus did. See what He said about it. See chiefly what He did about it. He did not pray just to set an example. He lived the life of prayer because for Him it was worth living. It kept the channels of life open, the tides of real power flowing, for Him as it would for us. He becomes an example because of the reality of His practice. There was nothing artificial about it. It was

not sham praying or display praying. He did not pray in order that or because men might see Him and be impressed and stimulated to do likewise. He prayed because He felt the need of it and knew the value of it. He did not mean to have any low moments. He purposed to keep life persistently at its highest levels. He was determined that His personality should project His activity as far as possible. The more He had to do the more ready and able He must be for the doing of it. The fundamental condition of successful activity was and is personality. It must conform to the higher ritual; it must keep perfect its contact with the life of God. Men ought always to pray, not because of the answers they get in the ordinary sense, but because of the power true prayer brings into the life of a praying man. Jesus is the best exemplification of what prayer means.

I cannot take time to study at length the other methods of His life. They are imperfectly covered by the terms: submission to the best influences, use of the best literature, and "practice of the presence of God."

When Christ put Himself into our human conditions He took upon Himself our human tendencies and exposed Himself to our human perils. His life was not so shielded that the things which mean so much to us meant nothing to Him. We have to make our constant fight for character. It would upset the universe if the life of the best one in our race did not bring us the best light upon this struggle. I believe it does. For this reason I am saying so much about the life methods of Jesus. How did He keep Himself from every taint and stain of evil? How did He keep Himself strong and right? I hesitate to say anything else, and am inclined to leave these two questions with you for silence and thought and meditation and prayer.

Still, I suppose, we must take up the subject of the methods of His activities. For the end of training is not character but character for service. Life methods must find their fruitful expression in activity. Men of good will and good feeling must be men of good deeds. It is only a few rods from the

Transfiguration to the boy possessed by the demons. Now methods are necessarily conditioned by time and place and circumstance. This is a commonplace which needs only to be stated. With this the way is clear. What did Jesus intend to do? He had a program. We have already studied that. How did He try to do it? What spirit, what motives, what temper did He bring to His task? His life was all of one piece. What He intended to do determined His methods and His spirit.

Some years ago a suggestive volume of sermons appeared with the title, *The Son of Man Among the Sons of Men*. More recently there have been several of the same import. Some of this has been good, some of it rather overdone. Some of it is quite underdone. We must not exaggerate the artistic perfection of Christ's dealing with men to such an extent that He appears chiefly as an artist. Nor must we on the other hand underestimate the wisdom of it so as to create the impression that it was all unstudied and spontaneous. The life of Jesus may be made either too hard or too easy; so hard as to

discourage us, so easy as to lose all value. We may come to feel on one hand that we can do nothing for men until we understand them with an infallible understanding, or on the other, that we can do them all possible good without any understanding at all. For example, take the familiar case of Thomas. It is our easy habit, our lazy habit, to characterize him as doubting Thomas, or Thomas the Doubter. And the word is supposed to cover not only poor Thomas but all other doubters as if they were all alike. It is also supposed that the word itself is so luminous as to define the thing fully. But everybody who has had any dealings with life feels the unreality of this easy method. Characterization by epithet is like salvation by phrase or religious statement by shibboleth, too handy and convenient to be effective. So with all such neat and readily quoted terms as are familiar to us. They are likely to mislead. One does not understand a character just because he has affixed a term to it. If we did we need not spend any time in the School of Christ.

· Yet we may comfort ourselves with the fact that Jesus met and dealt with pretty much every type of character in His own day. Times and circumstances have all changed, but life has persisted. The qualities of manhood remain as of old. We must meet in new conditions the old personalities. Conditions and character interact and react upon each other and we have to reckon as Jesus did with both. There, perhaps, is the first great lesson as to the method of Jesus in dealing with men and society: He gave His message and wrought His work with sane regard to time and place. Like every true prophet He did the thing that was timely. He brought the eternal to the temporary, the universal to the local and particular, He dealt with the men of His time and the men of His land. One of the best commencement addresses of a recent year was on "Strategy and Tactics." Jesus was both a strategist and a tactician, but He was such a skillful tactician because He was such a perfect strategist. When He captured a man like Matthew He laid hold of

all the manhood of that kind in the world. His dealing with the rich young ruler goes to the heart of all the youth having any kind of wealth since that time. His dominion over Peter appeals to all of Peter's kind.

We are somewhat liable to overestimate the value of Jesus' methods of personal work as examples for us. He had a brief ministry. His chief concern was to train a few who would carry it on after He was gone. He made small assault upon the mass. We are in the place of His disciples rather than in His place. Our work is like theirs rather than like His in its details. They were with Him to learn what He did that they might know what and how they were to do. We are in His school to learn our task. We must gather individuals as He did, but we must also attack the mass. We must pick out the choice ones as He did. Here His methods are incomparable. We must help train the new twelve and here again with due regard to changed conditions His methods are our guide. But we must also gather multitudes as Peter did at Pentecost. In

other words we are in the School of Christ not only to see what the Master did and to learn His own and immediate methods in dealing with men and society, but to see what the graduates of that School did and are expected to do under His influence and after receiving His instruction. And this requires us to study the Apostolic Church as well as the life of our Lord, and for this purpose I commend to you such books as Bruce's *The Training of the Twelve*; Carpenter's *The Son of Man Among the Sons of Men*; Greenough's *The Apostles of Our Lord*; Peabody's *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*; Matthews' *The Social Teaching of Jesus*; Hugh Price Hughes' *Social Christianity*; and a volume called *The Magnetism of Christ: a Study of our Lord's Missionary Methods*, by Dr. John Smith, dedicated to "Our Students in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen."

Finally, we must spend a few minutes considering the spirit He brought to His task. Here again certain assumptions are most important. The first of them is Christ's view

of humanity. I am sure we must possess this if we are to do those other things of which we shall speak during the remaining hours. His view of humanity was fundamental. It was not "respect for high attainment nor pity for low condition." It went deeper and higher than that. "Every man was and is a child of God, let that fact go where it will." And there is small hope for any man's ministry which has not this spirit and basis. He may have a passion for sinners because they are sinners. This was Cardinal Manning's word of praise for the Salvation Army. Or at the other extreme a man may have a vast admiration for man because of man's inherent excellence. In either case he will have a partial and incomplete ministry. There is only one remedy or cure for this and that is Jesus' view of man used as a working basis. Tucker says, "We are apt to retire our doctrines. They represent the truth we have on deposit." But Jesus made this His working basis: Every man is a child of God. That is a part of the good news.

This, I believe, was the root of His compassion, which was not pity for aliens; the root of His kindness which enabled Him, as Robert Louis Stevenson said, "to be a little kinder than was necessary." This was the root of His long patience: He was dealing with men of His own blood; the root of His courage and the root of His unchanging love; this the root of His passion for men. These qualities in Him once begot like qualities in other men. If we live with Him in truth they will beget like qualities again.

Further it was this conception, I think, which led to the utterance of that fine and fundamental statement of the spirit of our Master: "For their sakes, that they may be sanctified in the truth I sanctify Myself." The easiest thing in the use of language is to mix and misplace your pronouns. You can almost test a life by this test. Well, apply the test here. Our Master will bear it. Here is the relation of the one to the many: "For their sakes." This is the end for which one strives in behalf of the many: "That they may be sanctified in the truth."

Here is the process by which one maintains these perfect relations and obtains this worthy end : " I sanctify myself." For this, and for them, he seems to say, " I keep myself from sin. I keep myself at my best. I live among men. I offer myself up." It is to master these methods both of life and activity, to acquire this spirit for life and activity, that we are in the School of Christ. This is the test we ourselves must bear at last. It is not academic but personal, and all the harder for that reason. But the acquiring of this spirit is worth a lifetime of effort.

" Oh, Lord and Master of us all
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,
We test our lives by Thine."

We are getting into the character of Jesus. We work our way through the story of His methods, the disclosure of His spirit and the actual revelations of His qualities into a knowledge of Him. We are not told everything we would like to know, but we

are told enough to enable us to know Him accurately. But we can interpret what is told us, we can understand the character of Christ only so far as we live with Him and live like Him. This is not alone the method of approach, it is the method of keeping the way open and of continued understanding. There are many ways of approach to this relation, but the relation is imperative. Nobody knows London or New York unless he lives in them and with them and for them. Perhaps this last suggestion will help us. Take New York, for example. Suppose one comes down the Hudson River, by rail or by boat. Suppose another crosses over by ferry or through the tunnel and the river, from Jersey City or Hoboken. Suppose still another comes in from Long Island over one of the great bridges and another on an Atlantic liner from Europe. Every first impression of the city will differ from every other, every one will be tremendous, every one will be inadequate, every one the beginning of an overwhelming sense of the size, the force, the personality of the city itself.

It will strike these observers as having points of resemblance to every other city they have seen, even to villages and towns. There are features and characteristics common to all. It will not strike them all alike or from the same angle. It will strike them all as different from anything they have ever seen. And as the city grows and grows upon them all it will seem the chief city of the world to them. Let us see if we can disentangle for our purpose some of the words which have been suggested to these several observers: likeness, unlikeness, extraordinariness, preëminence. Perhaps we shall translate these into more theological terms before we are through and perhaps not. We shall see.

The city is like other cities and in essence like other towns. It is a city among cities. That is the first thing that impresses us. This gives it its point of contact with all other municipal life. So our Master was a man among men. That is the primary truth. Some never go any further than this and some go so far that they forget this. This

fact of likeness gives Him His point or points of contact with all other personal life. We do not quite get into the subject as the first disciples did. We must not press the analogy of method until it goes on all fours. But for them and for us He must make His own impression. He moved in the region of normal life. He lived in the realm of personality. He was measured once and must be again by the terms of human measurement. As Gore suggests, "He must be considered not in comparison with laws, but in comparison with persons. He must be thought of not as a problem but as a character." In all these qualities and experiences then belonging to true personality, we must think of Him as normal and human. His personal habits and activities, His personal relations and attitudes, all proclaim the genuineness of His human nature. The dweller from the village sees in the great city the same qualities he sees in the small town. The common man feels a sense of kinship with our Master. The carpenter at work yonder on the new building, or in his

small shop, in his best hours remembers that other carpenter. The village boy learning a trade recalls how that far-off boy did the same. As one has said: "The contributions which the world made to His personality were of the same sort which the world makes to all men. The gifts of home and nature and experience of joy and friendship and prayer came from the treasure house of God in rich bounty, but not with partiality." These were all His as they are or may be ours. As Browning put it:

"A Face like my face . . . a Man like to me,
. . . a Hand like this hand."

He touches life at life's own levels. The atmosphere in which He lives and works is normal. We all feel this, but we know also that this term does not exhaust the list that applies to Him. Men easily speak of the human life of God and the divine life of man, but these are only partial truths.

I am reluctant to use the word unlikeness. The villager, after a sober comparison between the village and the city in which he

finds himself, finds them at root alike, but nevertheless sums up his conclusion in the words : " Our town is no such town as this." Yet in both, men are trading and cheating, hating and loving, telling the truth and lying, doing the same things. The facts of life are all common facts. The starting point is the same, the processes do not essentially differ. But something sets New York far up above the village in the Catskills. Things are on a different scale. The scale is so much larger that the kind is unlike. Life and commerce are on a far vaster plan. Everything has more meaning, a broader scope and reach. This ordinary man finds at work forces and energies which dazzle and stun him. He becomes conscious of new relations, world relations, events that bear stupendous significance. His own small town looks small, but not contemptible. It looks more valuable because he has seen this better, bigger city. Now drop that figure. Quit thinking of towns, and go back again to personalities. In this school we are in the presence of One. No matter by what path we came we here

come to Him. He is unlike as well as like, unlike chiefly as it usually seems to us. Everything about Him is on a new scale. His outlook, His plans, have daring and scope and reach. He handles the powers of an endless life. He amazes us. He came through all those common experiences that we call the ordinary normal life, but He came through them differently and to greater purpose. He dwelt in time, but lived a manifestly eternal life in the midst of time. He was surrounded by nature and man's relations to it, but not mastered by them. He, too, felt the force of temptation, such temptation as only lofty souls feel, but He bore Himself through it all with such poise, such self-control, as sets Him in a class by Himself.

He wielded one force that awes us to this day. We call it His sinlessness. This is more than the absence of wrong in His life. It is not a negative virtue. This is a supreme and unmatched power. It is a good deal more than absence of defect. It is the perfect realization of ideal character. Every man feels it since Peter perceived it. Here is the

unutterable splendour of a being before whom we cry out: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man." There are things going on in other men that are not going on in Him. The city is not only larger, the new city is wholly clean and free from evil.

We do not fully estimate the significance of this stupendous fact. The old Jews had a legend, you remember, to the effect that the true pronunciation of the name of Jehovah had been lost, and that whoever recovered it should have the secrets of nature opened to him and the forces of nature put in his hand. It is more than a legend. Those first students in the School of Christ heard their Master, our Master, speak the word Father with the true filial accent, and lo! nature was to Him as an open book, while at His word unmatched marvels took place. But better than that His sinlessness secured other results. We covet the power to do those physical marvels and a vast cult arises based upon its pretenses to do again the works of Christ. But the results of sinlessness are vastly more rich and precious than

the power to do physical marvels. Sinlessness gives men a clear insight into moral issues. I quote suggestive words: "It does not involve omniscience, but it does involve the ability to see the truth of things; to penetrate all shams, all deceits, all hypocrisies, to unravel the tangled skein of the moral life."

Already in listening to what Jesus said we were overwhelmed by hearing Him say to His Father: "I know that Thou hearest Me always." What is that? Is this a new definition of sinlessness? Jesus' life was all of a piece. Sinlessness kept the way open. Keeping the way open preserved the sinlessness. Out of this came His authority to speak what we are here to listen to. Out of this came His power to do what we are here to see. Out of this comes that complete and perfect personality which must ever be the world's best possession.

But let us hurry back again before we get too far away. We must not lose Him in this well-deserved eulogy. We must not set Him so far apart from anything we are

or any one we know that the connection will be broken. We cry out in Sidney Lanier's wonderful words :

“ But Thee, but Thee, O Sovereign Seer of time,
But Thee, O poet's Poet, wisdom's tongue,
But Thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,
O perfect life in perfect labour writ,
O all men's Comrade, Servant, King or Priest,
What *if* or *yet*, what mole, what flaw, what lapse, .
What least defect or shadow of defect,
What rumours tattled by an enemy
Of influence loose, what lack of grace,
Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's or death's,—
Oh, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,
Jesus, good Paragon, Thou Crystal Christ ? ”

All that He is. But we are His pupils in His School with Him. We will not take a low view of Christ just to keep Him near. We will not set Him apart and afar even while we enthrone Him. We will keep the point of contact and the vision of preëminence.

Have you forgotten that there is still one word left back there which we have not yet considered? We were speaking of towns and we spoke of preëminence. You knew where that word came from at the time, and your

lips spontaneously framed the sentence "that in all things He might have the pre-eminence." That word was affixed once by a master writer to our Master. There it stays. That is the impression He makes on us. He always made it. Likeless, unlikeness, extraordinariness, preëminence,—these are the terms. They are not a complete list. Yet they will do. You remember in *The Bonnie Brier Bush* Flora Campbell said to Margaret Howe: "It is a peety you hef not the Gaelic; it is the best of all languages for loving. There are fifty words for darling, and my father will be calling me every one that night I came home." Those early students were not stylists, not at all like Walter Pater or Henry James. They knew, however, five or six words for Master and they applied them all to Him. They were not restrained in their efforts to tell what they thought He was. I can easily imagine John and James, or Peter and Paul comparing notes, measuring the terms each had applied to Jesus, and the efforts each had made to state the impression Christ had made on them, each in a different

way. And then I can easily imagine them stopping it all and bowing down with shame and regret that their best was so poor and inadequate.

“Join all the glorious names
Of wisdom, love and power ;
All are too mean to speak His worth,
Too mean to set the Saviour forth.”

The terms of the New Testament are all vital. They are not academic. The doctrine of Christ came not of resolution or effort to frame a doctrine. The doctrine of Christ was born of the fact of Christ as men lived themselves into it. The person was not created by the doctrine, the doctrine came from the person. Those first men did not hesitate to attribute to Him terms belonging to deity. They were not afraid of what we now call the supernatural. These two great words “deity” and “supernatural” had to come out here sooner or later. They are always in danger of being used as shibboleths. Many men talk of the deity of Christ not because they have lived with Him until

this has become a burning truth, but because the stout assertion of it is held to be an unflinching test of orthodoxy. They ardently quote the words of the confession or the articles: "Very God of very God and very man of very man"—true words, but absolutely dead words unless one has lived his way into them by living companionship with our brother and Lord. It is so easy to say the words. It is so easy, as Gordon says, to have extemporized convictions about Christ. What I am trying to say is that we must enter the School of Christ to learn what He was; that there our judgments must be completed and perfected, that tuition must precede opinion, that "discipleship must precede apostleship." There are a dozen ways of approaching Him, but by every one of these ways the faithful soul seeking to come to the truth for life's purposes succeeds in coming.

I know something of the troubled atmosphere of the time in which we live. The questions of our age press down upon me. It is given to me to look every year into the eager faces of thousands of students for

whom this question concerning Jesus Christ, who He is, is the perplexing, staggering question of life. They do not listen to the old voices of authority. Councils do not greatly impress them. The old arguments are not all convincing. The ground of controversy and defense has shifted even in twenty-five years. The answer to this supreme question must be such that the modern student can "knit it into the rest of his mental furniture." And this modern student is not convinced at all until he is wholly convinced. He wants to believe with his whole system, as Brooks said about praying. What then shall we say to him and to the rest of our modern world at home and abroad? For the question of who Christ is, and what Christ is, is not simply the small affair of your opinion or mine; it is the supreme world question. I know of no method of bringing men to the truth except to bring them to the truth as it is in Jesus. The words "bringing men to Jesus" have been abused by a soft treatment of them. I would restore them to their high personal sig-

nificance and make them mean again what they meant in that far-off time when He said, "Come and see." Into the School of Christ, to hear what He said, to see what He did, that they may learn what He is, I would invite men. The way of life with Him and like Him is the sacred way to truth about Him. And the knowledge of Him sets life free. Men who live with Him and live like Him come to know Him. I do not ask full faith at the beginning. I only ask men to try. You remember Matthew Arnold's brave words:

" Long fed on boundless hopes, O race of man,
How angrily thou spurn'st all simpler fare !
' Christ,' some one says, ' was human as we are ;
No judge eyes us from Heaven, our sin to scan ;

" ' We live no more, when we have done our span.'—
' Well, then, for Christ,' thou answerest, ' who can
care ?

From sin, which Heaven records not, why forbear ?
Live we like brutes our life without a plan ! '

" So answerest thou ; but why not rather say :
' Hath man no second life ?—Pitch this one high.'
Sits there no judge in Heaven, our sin to see ?—

“ ‘ More strictly, then, the inward judge obey !
Was Christ a man like us ? Ah ! let us try
If we then, too, can be such men as He ! ’ ”

Into the School of Christ we come as learners, chiefly to learn of Him. We hear Him speak, we see Him work, we watch the methods and spirit of His life ; gleams of His character break upon our vision ; we walk the path of obedience, of fellowship, of sacrifice, of truth, of toil, of life until we cry out in adoring love :

‘ Thou art the King of Glory, oh Christ,
Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.’ ”

And this is life eternal—to know Him.

I am loath to leave this part of our subject. I do not seem to have half said what at the start I wanted to say. Always I am trying to understand the truth of Christ, the truth in Christ ; always I am trying to master Christ’s program and purpose, to know fully what He intended and intends to do in the world ; always I am trying to become acquainted with Him. For this triple

purpose many times and in many ways each year I read and study the four Gospels, and seek all light from all sources upon these problems. What a school this School of Christ is ! What truth, what activities, what a Person ! It is the truth best worth learning, it is the thing best worth doing, He is the Person best worth knowing. Oh, men already in, and men coming into this School, lift up your hearts with pride and with joy that He ever chose you to be with Him !

LECTURE IV

SENT FORTH BY THE
MASTER: WITH A MESSAGE

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SENT FORTH BY THE MASTER: WITH A MESSAGE

THIS theme turns our look outward. There are two great events in a person's college life. One is his matriculation, the other his graduation; his entrance and his departure. Going into college and going through college bear steadily and constantly towards getting out into the world. All this is in our text, the one we have had all the while in mind,—“And He goeth up into the mountain, and calleth unto Him whom He Himself would; and they went unto Him. And He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach, and to have authority to cast out demons” (Mark iii. 13-15). They go in with Him that they may go out for Him. They study that they may teach, they learn that they may do and achieve. They go in out of the world that

they may go out into the world. They become disciples that they may become apostles. They become students that they may become prophets. This is the true order, though it is sometimes reversed. Some men become apostles and prophets immediately. They do not last long nor amount to much.

The task of the graduate is vastly more difficult than the task of the undergraduate. It is far easier to earn a diploma than it is to live up to one, just as it is far easier to be ordained than it is to be a deacon or an elder. We do not now turn our backs upon the school. We take everything we have learned and obtained there and face the world with it. We especially do not leave our Master as we go out to preach. The teacher of Greek or literature remains in his chair as we go forth, only going with us in his teaching and his abiding influence. But the Master of the School of Christ goes forth with those who have been with Him and remains with them all the days. This makes our task both difficult and possible. Because He is with us we must do it in a fashion

worthy of Him ; because He is with us we can so do it if we will.

I suppose the very familiarity of the term preaching compels us to attempt some statement as to what preaching means and some estimate of its place in our plan. Christ's estimate of the value of teaching is seen in the place He gave it in His life schedule. Men are not in the habit of asking themselves, as they ought, every little while : 'What is this thing I am doing ? What is its relation to my life plan as a whole ? And am I doing it as it ought to be done in view of its place in the total work of my life ?'

Preaching, which seems particular, thus integrates with the general. It reaches out in every direction and everything reaches in to it. It ceases to be a thing of momentary meaning, the significance of one sermon to a few people. All the truth we have learned stands up crying for right utterance ; all mankind is in the small congregation crying to be taught ; Christ and humanity have met in this chance to come together. I spoke recently at the funeral of a colleague greatly

beloved. It seemed to me that all the grief of all my brethren stood before me demanding expression ; and the speech ceased to be my speech and was caught up, as all true speaking should always be, into those upper currents where the universal and eternal meet the local and temporary.

The words "to preach" reach back to what we have been studying, to Christ's teaching, His activities and His Person ; and reach forward to the interpretation and presentation of all this so that men shall be set free by this truth, engage in these works and know this supreme Person. The output is in natural and true relation to the intake. I know no better statement of it than the one given by an early student in the School of Christ :

"That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto

us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us : yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ : and these things we write, that our joy may be full " (1 John i. 1-4).

What they learned in the School of Christ determined, when they were sent out, the content of their preaching. Somehow this seems to be getting preaching above the question whether it shall be done in Nashville or Hard Scrabble, whether it shall be paid for in large salary or in small. It puts such a golden glow upon preaching that one rejoices in the chance to do it anywhere. The man with this vision links his own preaching with the preaching of the Master, his purpose in preaching with the Master's purpose, the truth he preaches with the truth he has learned from the Master, and preaching never again in any place looks common or unimportant.

Now in all these matters definitions are somewhat in the nature of vanity. We cannot put into the verbal definition of preach-

ing or any other great thing the abounding life that ought to be in the thing itself. Recall, for example, Mr. John Morley's definition of literature: "Literature consists of all the books—and they are not many—where moral truth and human passion are touched with a certain largeness, sanity, and attraction of form." That is as good a definition of literature as any, but it is good chiefly because it is so roomy and flexible. Take any definition of preaching and you will see the same thing. Some of us were brought up on Phelps and committed his famous sentence to memory: "Preaching is an oral address, to the popular mind, upon religious truth as contained in the Scriptures, elaborately treated with a view to persuasion." That is a perfectly good definition for a text-book, but it is discouraging to see how many poor, wooden sermons can be built on so good a definition. Here is another, which overflows with the personal quality: "Preaching is the communication of truth by man to man. It has two essential elements, truth and personality. Preaching is the bringing of

truth through personality. Jesus chose this method of extending the knowledge of Himself through the world." So said Phillips Brooks in his "Yale Lectures," when for some of us the world was young.

"Truth through personality!" That may not be very precise, but it is very rich. It touches at once the truth we have learned and the men we have become or may become. It gives truth a personal quality. It links our method with the method of God in the incarnation. We seem to have a relation now to the very way in which God brought His truth through Jesus Christ to us men. He was a messenger, a witness, a living letter from God to men. In Him and through Him God spoke and revealed Himself to men. In this light our small personal conception of preaching breaks to pieces in our hands. "The words which Thou gavest Me I have given unto them." "As the Father hath sent Me into the world, even so send I you into the world." This puts us into those eternally right and eternally vital relations with Christ Himself and with historic Chris-

tianity. It gives us a preaching out of the Christian ages for the age in which we preach.

And it gives us a truth which can always be saved from becoming individual and petty. This is the value of the return to Christ, that we get past the imperfect to the perfect in religion, past the abstract to the personal truth, past the fragmentary to the complete. The evangel is so complete that it thrills one even yet as though we were just now hearing it for the first time. Many things are absent from the gospels and the Gospel, but nothing is lacking for an evangel to any age. The Gospel as a gospel is perfect. And in the School of Christ we have mastered that living, balanced, harmonious, permanent revelation in word, deed and person which we are to make vital to our generation. The eternal exists. The eternal has been manifested and experienced in time. The eternal thus manifested and experienced must be declared. The eternal saves the personal from being weak and thin. The declaration of the eternal is not that men may know our experience but that they may know

the eternal. This touch with the eternal keeps the fires from going out. This swings us into that truth which we are to preach. For we are not preachers of every kind of truth, but of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. And just here we are always exposed to two or three dangers; one that we shall not get that truth, one that we shall mistake something else for it, and another that we shall fail to preach it in its fullness and richness. Men think the truth of Christ is easy to acquire, or that it is identical with certain facts about Christ. Or they think that everything in the Old and New Testaments, just because it is there, stands on the same level for preaching purposes. Or they fear the truth because it cuts across conventions and prejudices, hoary opinions and intrenched dogmas. But, after all is said, no one can preach who has not known and vitalized in his own life and humanized in his own experience the truth of Christ. And no one who does thus know it can preach anything else. Nor will he just for effect withhold anything that is true or say anything that is false. He knows that

the heavens do not fall when the truth is spoken in love, in love for the truth and for the men to whom it is spoken.

And such a preacher is not afraid of the whole truth of Christ. He does not overwork the elective principle. Balance is destroyed and perspective lost when one becomes a specialist in this matter of preaching. An exclusive devotion either to the teaching, the work or the person of Christ is attended with evil results. An exclusive devotion to the teaching of Christ, to the neglect of His work and person, leads to a barren dogmatism and intellectualism. Definitions, phrases and propositions become the test of orthodoxy and the object of faith. An exclusive devotion to the deeds of Christ leads to an impotent and exaggerated activity, impotent because broken off from His refreshing person and His sustaining teaching, exaggerated because out of balance. An exclusive devotion to His person leads at last to false ecstasy and mysticism. And in any case the partial and fragmentary obtain possession always to the hurt of life and always to the loss of the

kingdom. An exclusive use of features and phases of the truth as it is in Jesus has the same deadly effect, whether it be the hard truths or the gentle ones upon which one lays the emphasis. The preacher who does not use all the truth he has will not touch with power all the life he meets. The comprehension of Christ's infinitely rich revelation is the task of the student, its proclamation the joy of the preacher. The revelation in its fullness determines the theme of his study and the content of his message. The partial so easily takes the place of the complete that we must ever be on guard against it. Men talk about declaring the whole counsel of God, and identify this with preaching some of the sterner truths. Indeed, when one is laying the whole stress of his preaching upon one detached truth he is almost certain to fortify himself by an allusion to "the whole counsel," and to say that he will preach thus whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. It all seems very brave to the man who is doing it. And when men will not hear he exalts himself as a martyr to his

own courage and fidelity to the truth. The farewell address of Paul to the Ephesian elders will hardly bear the strain often put upon it: "I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable. . . . I went about preaching the kingdom. . . . I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God." Or men talk about preaching their experience as though this constituted the measure of Christ's perfect and rich revelation. How defective and imperfect all this partial preaching looks when the perfect content of the preacher's message is discovered! And this is learned not in a moment nor a day, only in the school of which it is said: "He chose certain to be with Him." And such men will not fail to announce Christianity as a message rather than to discuss it as a problem. Moreover the whole counsel will centre in this: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." "What we have seen and heard that declare we unto you."

Let us see that the steps we are taking are kept clear and distinct. Sent forth to

preach; sent forth to preach the truth of Christ; sent forth to preach the truth of Christ to our own age. We are now at the third step. There will be still others and we must consider them in their order.

Those first students had to understand Christ and His religion. Then they had to interpret both to their generation. Their work was not easy nor simple. The letters of John, James, Peter and Paul which are part of the intellectual output of that first group show this. The writers first sought to apply their Master's teaching to their age. We are more numerous than they. The accidents of the task have changed. Its essence remains unchanged. We have to apply Jesus' teaching, the truth of Christianity to our age. Certain implications confront us at the threshold of this part of our discussion.

In order to apply the truth of Christ to the age we must measurably understand the age itself. The message of Jesus was in nothing more remarkable than in its local and temporary appropriateness. In our admiration

for its adaptation to all times and all ages we sometimes overlook that fact. It struck its roots into the ages by taking root in its own age. Sometimes it is said: "History is never antiquated because humanity is always fundamentally the same. Human nature persists through the ages, truth persists through the ages. Therefore let us have the old truth, or the old Gospel.' Hold on!—not quite so easy or so fast, if you please. Such vague generalizations are the pitfalls into which the ministry readily falls, especially a lazy ministry posing as a pious ministry. Many years ago when I was a young university officer the Hon. Andrew D. White, former president of Cornell University, visited Denver. I called to pay my respects. The great man received me most graciously, and after some conversation said: "I will give you a bit of fundamental educational wisdom. If you remember it you may succeed; if you forget it you are sure to fail. Every institution must work out its own problems on its own grounds." I smiled, but he was right. That is the law of the

farm, the school and the kingdom. Enlarge it and make it read: "Every institution must work out its own problems on its own grounds and in its own times," and it fits our case and most other cases. The nature of soil persists. Sun and air and moisture are as they were. Corn is corn, grain is grain, growth is growth in all lands and centuries. But farming is not to-day the same thing that it was in Abraham's day, nor is it the same thing in Illinois or Dakota that it was, or is, in Abraham's country. The human faculties persist, truth persists, but teaching is not quite the same thing it was in the days of Socrates or in his country. No more is preaching, even though the old gospel be preached to the old human nature. One cannot detach himself either from the eternal or the temporary. It is the universal law: the eternal message to your own grounds and your own times.

Many men break here by the adoption of a too easy process. Just preach the old Gospel, they say, as if that were ever easy. I shall have more to say of that in a few

minutes. I am now trying to say that if a modern minister is to apply Jesus' teaching it must be in the time in which and the place where that modern minister lives. Naturally then there is involved an understanding of that time and place. Do I need say that there are men who are failing at this point? They treat every locality in the same fashion; city and country, college town and stock yards, as if they were all alike. They have preached for twenty-five years without noting at all that the conditions of life have been revolutionized in that time. They regard their course as showing consistency and confidence in the Gospel. They complain bitterly because a modern world passes them by, and they apply bad names to that modern world. That thing they name consistency and confidence is often only stupidity and laziness. You will not minister to your age unless you understand the age as well as you can. And by this I mean the whole temper of the age. It is a very complex thing. One word alone will not characterize it. Dr. Van Dyke called it an age of doubt,

but doubt is only one of its features. It would be just as true to say that it is an age eager for truth. Others call it an age of faith. Others term it an age of commerce, but this is also partial. So with the terms expansion, unrest, great fortunes, industrial development. They are all accurate and all inadequate. No one of them sufficiently characterizes our age. Yet you must know the age if you are to preach the Gospel to it. You must know the age if you are to apply Christ's teaching even to a small town. There is no obscure place anywhere. The temper of the age penetrates everywhere. "There is not so much difference as there used to be between the man in the city and the man on the farm. The man in the city has an automobile; so has the man on the farm. The man in the city has his daily paper at breakfast; so has the man on the farm. The man in the city has his piano, and phonograph, and library, and magazines, and other agencies for self-culture; so has the man on the farm. The man in the city sends his boys and girls to college; so does

the man on the farm. Each has his intellectual, social, and spiritual needs which are practically alike."

You are not preachers to the past nor preachers about the past. You are preachers of an eternal Gospel in time and you must know this time which is the only time you have. Do not pity yourself on that account. And do not waste your life condemning the age. Let the age and its difficulties be your stimulus and challenge. One who is doing it best says: "Reason and faith join hands to proclaim that the God of the old times is the God of the new times; that if Christ's Spirit was immanent in the Church as a living power in the first century or the fourth or the sixteenth, it is not less immanent in the Christendom of the twentieth—that the social movements and tumults of to-day are the very waves upon which the Master's feet come walking" (Lyman: *Preaching in the New Age*).

The age always includes Christ. He is the eternal contemporary. He fits the language of modern street and school and can be

interpreted in either. I was very slow to accept any phases or forms of the doctrine of evolution until one day that phrase "survival of the fittest" mixed itself up with Christ and Christianity, and I was told that if that doctrine is true, Christ and His Christianity have the final chance for permanence. They are the fittest truths and facts alive to-day. This very scientific temper makes it a perfect joy to preach Christ to the age. This age is vastly better for a true preacher than an unscientific age would be.

So with all the rest of the characterizations, such as "age of capitalist, and age of socialist." It looks like the fullness of times again for Christ. Preaching Christ at such a junction surpasses any chance that any previous age has offered. Only you must remember who is to have the preëminence. It is not the capitalist nor the socialist. It is the Christ.

And in all this preaching to your age you are to be a prophet. A prophet's message is both timely and permanent. He gets it out of the ages, not simply out of the ages past or those to come. He belongs neither

to the conservatives nor the radicals. "He refuses to be side-tracked either on the 'Old School' or the 'New School' rails." There is evening and there is morning, and they are one day and it is Christ's day, and the prophet knows every hour of it and makes Christ the radiant Lord of them all.

We are to preach the Gospel to men in the age in which we live. Easy and vague generalizations expose the pulpit to contempt as they ought. We must apply the truth of Christ to our age. That is why we are in the School of Christ. Many a man understands the times of Christ far better than he does the times of Roosevelt. Many a man has fairly studied the truth of Christ without learning how to apply it. Take an illustration. You are discussing the labour problem, or the problem of capital and labour. Before you get through you will tell your audience what an immense and troublesome problem it is. Then you will gather yourself for a supreme declaration: "I tell you, my beloved brethren, the only cure for this great problem is in the Ten Commandments

and the Sermon on the Mount." Then you will sit down with a feeling that you have said it. I have heard that said more than once with such show of unction that I wonder there is any unction left in the world. What would you think of a physician who should cry out to a plague-stricken community that the remedy for this epidemic is medicine, or a lawyer who should cry out that the cure for disorder is law, or a teacher that the cure for ignorance is reading? Do you see? That truth of yours is a general truism. It must be pressed down and back upon modern life in detail if it is to be effective. What is the message of Jesus to the modern man of wealth? to the modern man of poverty? the application of the teaching of Jesus to the modern social conditions? If anybody thinks such application is simple let him try it in any real way on a section of Halsted Street, or the Bowery, or at the Stock Yards, or on Wall Street, or on Fifth Avenue, or in the lumber regions of Wisconsin, or a mining camp in Montana, or in the mills of the South.

The application of Jesus' teaching to men and to society is a consummate intellectual achievement. There are cheap ways, mechanical ways, ineffectual ways, all of them in vogue. Men miss in them the note of real authority, though there is plenty of the language and tone of authority. Some men make up in the assertion of authority what they lack in the real power of authority. Then some real man comes along and studies the Sabbath question in a dairy country, for example, until he is master of it, and brings to it in the very spirit of Christ the teaching and mind of Christ, and men listen. He, too, starts with the lesson he learned in Christ's School that the Sabbath was made for man, just as the patriot starts with the Declaration of Independence. But he knows as the latter does that the securing of rational results from the broad principle is a thing of almost infinite difficulty and detail. And he takes refuge not in pious vagueness, but in the use of his consecrated brains to press the eternal principle down into the folds, the wrinkles, the crevices of daily life and subtle

problems. The principle must be made to penetrate like leaven and light. The Holy Spirit Himself has no higher office than to interpret the teachings of Jesus to a given age and place. We have not fallen upon evil days, but only upon other days. All is not lost. It is only changed. Never did a true interpreter have better or finer opportunity "to form the intellect in Christian belief and shape the age in Christian righteousness."

Still let us keep our steps clear. Sent forth to preach, to preach the truth of Christ, to preach it to our age and place. A word has been omitted, though it may by implication be in the words "truth of Christ." But this word must not be in simply by implication. For we are sent forth to preach the Gospel of Christ to our age. This does not simplify our task or make it easy. "Gospel" is a good word, but it is a very hard word. It could not be used any earlier in the course.

For preaching the Gospel truly to a given generation is the high-water mark of a preacher's work in the world. Matthew

Arnold invented a phrase which fairly defines the function of true preaching: "the application of noble ideas to life." Arnold called Emerson "the helper and friend of those who would live in the spirit." Dr. Gordon says that "the sphere in which the preacher should move is at the intersection of ideas and life." Our Master defined the function of truth in that memorable sentence: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." In one of our earlier studies we found ourselves in the School of Christ in order to hear what Jesus said. There we learned these noble ideas which are to be applied to life. We discovered our Master at the very centre of that meeting-place of life and truth. He chose us that we might be with Him at that centre, that we might acquire that truth which sets men free, see its relation to life, and that He might send us forth to preach it. It is because life is so valuable that truth is so important. We are rapidly completing the circle here. Chosen by Him, taught His truth, sent to preach—these are the words. But they are not com-

fortable words. With their frightful complications they break in on the peace of this quiet hour like a storm. For this is the thing we ought to be doing better than anything else is being done in this world. We ought to be preaching better than any physician practices, or any lawyer pleads, or any teacher instructs, or any merchant trades or any officer rules. This is at once the hardest and the highest thing men are asked to do. That it shall be well done is of consequence to the world.

Yet we treat it as though it were the easiest of all things. And the very best form of it we treat in the most flippant fashion. A man who has ostensibly been in the School of Christ to hear what Jesus said and been sent forth by Him to preach, will stand on the Sabbath day before an immortal congregation, large or small. All week this man has been busy, doing many useful things, making many calls, eating many dinners, drinking much tea, raising much money, peddling much gossip, burying many dead, and on Sunday he looks at his immortal congrega-

tion and says: "My brethren, beloved, I have been so occupied all the week that I have had no time to prepare. I will just preach you a simple little gospel sermon." Then that audience ought to arise and restrain him by force from doing that thing. In ninety-nine out of a hundred cases the man is going to talk pure commonplace. He is throwing over his talk the noblest of all words just to hide the utter nakedness of it. Men will be restrained from criticism of it if he calls it a gospel sermon, when they ought to blister the preacher and the sermon with their righteous wrath. If you must do an unworthy thing refrain from calling it by that noble name.

You know the unhappy meaning that phrase has come to bear in our ecclesiastical usage. Its application to a man is almost fatal. It advertises and does not cover the multitude of his shortcomings. Preaching the Gospel to an age is the hardest thing a man has to do in this world. A true gospel sermon is the highest reach of a preacher's power. It is like plain cook-

ing, the supreme test of one's skill. The cook who can cook beefsteak and potatoes, bake bread and make coffee which will bear the test of life is at the head of the profession. A good Gospel preacher, the man who can preach a Gospel sermon, may walk in front of his procession. I should be false to our Master if I did not make this protest and warning. Truth is not had for idle asking nor preached as a pastime. "The paths of men are no longer plain; they cross and recross with bewildering confusion; the world thickens, and he who makes too easy a thing of duty or of truth only adds in time one more bewildered or wayward soul to the care of the Great Shepherd and His church." The finest energy of each new age is demanded by the search for truth and the application of truth to life. This is the most serious and exacting task laid upon us men. We have to learn the truth as it is in Jesus and apply the truth to ourselves and to our fellow men so that, as Des Cartes said, "they and we may walk sure-footedly in this life."

Now I know, of course, how many other

things the modern preacher has to do. They need not be named. We all know them and know the place they occupy in our lives. A young woman was telling us the other day about her brother, a senior in college. He is a member of the glee club, the football team, the baseball team, the tennis club, the editorial staff, a literary society and a fraternity. I remarked that he must find it hard to get time for study. The young woman replied: "Oh, he does not let his studies interfere with his regular work." It was a playful remark, but I thought at once of the men who do not let their preaching interfere with their regular work. I know how they have been exhorted about pastoral visiting, collections, being good managers, looking after the business interests and all the rest. All that is important and necessary, but I would not be true if I did not tell you that the one thing the modern church will not and does not forgive is poor preaching. And it ought not to forgive it. One of the best of our younger preachers wails about the condition in which ministers have "lost faith

in the importance of their sermons and their ambition to make a sermon what it ought to be." He adds: "Rome was near her fall when the priests at her altars joked about the mass. It is a sign of skepticism and decadence in the Protestant pulpit that so many ministers can joke about their sermons and listen to attacks upon the work of preaching without indignant protest or swift rebuke. The greatest danger confronting the church of Christ in America to-day is a possible decadence of the pulpit. Let the pulpit decay and the cause of Christ is lost. Nothing can take the place of preaching. There is no power under heaven equal to a God-inspired pulpit. Nothing can take the place of the exposition of God's word by a man whose lips have been touched by a live coal from off God's altar. An ignorant pulpit is the worst of all scourges, an ineffective pulpit the most lamentable of all scandals."

And yet men aspire to be managers, and pride themselves upon being "hustlers," and add complacently that "they cannot preach much." And men say that of many of us.

Cannot preach much! Not much of a preacher! After such an experience, in such a school, with such a Master, holding such a message! Cannot preach much! When life lies at your hand to have these noble ideas applied to it! Cannot preach much! After hearing Jesus pray, and talk to one and many, while He opened the heavens to our view! Cannot preach much! After looking upon birth and death, childhood and youth, work and rest, trial and victory, love and marriage, joy and sorrow, hope and fear, men in sin and men in God, the new heavens and the new earth, the old life and the new, the souls of men and the truth of God—after looking upon all these with the eyes of Christ and in the company of Christ! Cannot preach much! With history and Psalm, and Gospel and living Epistle bursting with truth, with Holy Ghost waiting ever to touch again the lips of earnest, learning man! Cannot preach much! With the truth of Christ for your message, the aim of Christ for your aim, the men for whom He lived and died for your audience! Cannot

preach much! With life and truth and living men and living God all for your own! Cannot preach much! Oh, in heaven's name what can you do? Perhaps you can hustle or manage, or peddle small gossip, or deliver rations! That is what men say about many of us. *Their* judgment is bad enough. But how would you like to come back to the Master and tell Him that you could not preach much? What is the matter? Is His truth wrong? Is it not preachable? Does modern humanity not need it? Is the apostolic spirit entirely lacking? Or do you take your preaching lightly and indifferently? Emerson once said, at the age of thirty-seven, of his own lectures: "Ten decorous speeches and not one ecstasy, not one rapture, not one thunderbolt. Eloquence therefore there was none. . . . I spend myself prudently. I economize. I cheapen, whereof nothing grand ever grew." I heard a well-known man preach within a few years. He did not care for his stuff nor did anybody else. The hour for a sermon had come. He had thrown one together. It sounded as if he

had done it on the way to the church in the street car. Months afterwards I found the notes of the sermon in his pulpit Bible. It looked as it had sounded. I say nothing as to methods of preparation. Let every man be fully persuaded by his own experience. I am only pleading now that preaching the Gospel be highly regarded by us and that it be the real application of the teaching of Christ to life. Where this is not done the pulpit has lost its power. Wherever it is done the preacher is on the throne. Life gathers about the man who is really doing something for life.

Here perhaps as well as anywhere, we may speak of the preacher as a prophet. That is a very popular word among us, as the word priest is very unpopular. When we want to praise a man we call him a prophet. The term has ruined a good many men. It does not seem quite safe to call a modern man a prophet. Still a prophet he must be. I quite approved the title of an article which appeared a few years ago: "Wanted: Some Real Prophets." The

prophet speaks of God, in behalf of God. He must be a certain kind of man. One who has been in the School of Christ ought always to have such a living, burning message from God to men. It is easy to lose this sense. Dr. Jefferson declares: "It is easy for the pulpit to decay. The prophet has always had a tendency to degenerate into the priest. The man who speaks for God is always prone to slip down into the man who performs ceremonies for God. And every time a prophet degenerates into a priest a new darkness falls upon the world." Still the prophet was rather a partial figure though a very real one. Surely we come nearer to the truth when we say that the modern preacher must be a prophet to inspire and instruct, to speak for the Eternal God, to apply Christ's teaching which he has learned in Christ's School. The modern preacher must also be a priest to minister and serve and sacrifice after the fashion of the true High Priest in whose prophetic-priestly school he has been. Shall I say the rest of it? He must be a King, not to rule,

but to lead God's people in all real life. Prophet, Priest, and King, Teacher, Servant, Leader,—all these high meanings are in that noble word,—preacher!

Have I made clear the whole of this thing I have been trying to say? Remember that I quoted Matthew Arnold on "the application of noble ideas to life." And Dr. Gordon: "The sphere in which the preacher should move is at the intersection of ideas and life." And Jesus: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." I might have quoted St. Paul about "speaking the truth in love." All this will bear a little closer study. The preacher has his duty to truth and his duty to life. Men easily go astray here. One becomes a philosopher, a searcher after truth, the possessor of noble ideas: He loves to study, as he ought. He loves truth and likes to be classified among its possessors. The other becomes a missionary or a philanthropist. He loves men. He moves among them busily with open but empty hands. You know both classes, both less than half efficient. A famous scholar

tells his experience: "I had prepared a sermon which had been, I doubt not, profitable to me, but which was so utterly ineffect-ive as a sermon that I asked a discerning friend what was the difficulty with it. His reply was the best criticism I ever received. 'You seemed to me,' he said, 'to be more concerned about the truth than about men.' " That is it. On the other hand I heard one of the best of men recently who had come to care for men so much that he had nothing for them at all. He had long lost the divine sense of truth's value to men, or the place of truth in the redemption of men. You see preaching the Gospel is not an academic, nor an administrative, nor a commercial process. It is a redemptive agency. It looks both ways, towards Jesus the Redeemer and towards the unredeemed. "The pulpit is not a forum for the display of truth, nor a desk for the indifferent utterance of truth, nor a market for the sale of truth." The man sent by Christ out of the School of Christ to preach has Christ's own redemptive mission to fulfill. He is the herald of salva-

tion. He bears on his heart a cross for men. He holds in his hand Christ's truth for men's redemption. He takes Christ's view of truth. He takes Christ's attitude to men. Dr. Pentecost tells this story: He preached one day in the presence of Dr. Bonar and revelled in the preaching as a man sometimes will and always ought. At the close Dr. Bonar came up and said tenderly: "You love to preach, do you not?" "Yes, I do," said Dr. Pentecost quickly. "Do you love the men to whom you preach?" said Dr. Bonar quietly. That cuts deeper. The preacher who just loves preaching will be careful of his subjects. The true preacher, loving preaching as Christ's vital agency for bringing His saving truth to men, will be careful of his objects in preaching. "Men say I ramble," said Rowland Hill, "but if I ramble it is because you ramble and I must ramble after you. They say I do not stick to my subject, but, thank God, I stick to my object, viz., to win your souls to God." The preacher will apply noble ideas to life for life's sake. He will bring truth to men

that men may get free. He will bring Christ's teaching to men that they may be reconciled with God. He will test everything he does by its fruit in character and life. He will declare truth because he loves the truth and loves the men to whom he preaches it.

And the Gospel of Christ is so rich and majestic. And there is no other. The gospel of evolution which some men have preached, the gospel of anti-evolution which other men have preached; the gospel of higher criticism and the gospel of anti-higher criticism which some men are preaching, as if any of them were gospels through which men could come to Christ and be saved, are all alike intruders and false substitutes for the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. Men cut the nerve of their power, cut the nerve of their connection with the real Gospel, cut the nerve of their connection with their age and lose their power of appeal to their age when they lay the stress of the Gospel upon anything but the Gospel. And this loss of power in our generation is the

unspeakable tragedy which has befallen many sons of light.

This age is many kinds of an age. Reaction and obscurantism will appeal to part of it. Radicalism will appeal to part of it. Small truth will appeal to part of it. And any man is free to make his partial appeal if he chooses to do so. And the applause with which partial appeal is greeted by the partial deceives many into believing that they are really preaching the Gospel of Christ. But a preacher of the Gospel of Christ is not a member of a party. "He is neither a Tory nor a Liberal." He has not a message for any few, however chosen and select. Our fathers fought us free from that in all its applications and implications. Before us who have been sent forth by Christ stands humanity stripped of the accidents of condition or opinion. And before this essential and universal humanity we stand, ambassadors of God, pleading in Christ's stead with this humanity, preaching the Gospel to this humanity, that it may be reconciled to God. "Only the Gospel will bear the stress of a

gospel." One may pose as a conservative and think himself therefore both pious and orthodox, when he is neither; or he may pose as a liberal and think himself therefore both honest and free, when he is neither. The test of a man is not the class with which he ranks himself or the zeal with which he condemns all others than those in his class. This is the test: Does he know what the Gospel of Christ is, in its essence, in its historic, its present, its eternal beauty and power, and does he bring it like the Master Himself to the men of to-day in the language of life? Can you bear this test? The message of many has sagged. The message of many others has dwindled. Many are playing upon a single string, long since worn out. And the remedy is getting into Christ's perfect Gospel and preaching that in its fullness and richness, not in its hardness nor its softness. His Gospel for the individual will alone save personal life. His Gospel of the kingdom will alone save organized life. This in its completeness is our only claim to a hearing to-day.

You remember the picture Christian saw in Interpreter's house, which was Bunyan's conception of the Preacher :

"It had eyes uplift to Heaven, the best of Books in his hand, the Law of Truth was written upon his lips, the World was behind his back ; it stood as if it pleaded with Men, and a Crown of Gold did hang over its head."

We must say yet one more word. I am loath however to leave this point concerning which I have been speaking or to add another, though I did want to say something about preaching as the teaching of religion. This is the current movement so full of promise. I think I must forbear and hold fast to this one idea—the "application of noble ideas to life." Noble ideas—that is what we went into the School of Christ to obtain. That is what we did obtain. We must receive them without corruption and apply them to life without addition or subtraction. It took courage to go up the mountainside to see Christ face to face. It takes new courage to be an interpreter of Christ to our age. It is so much easier to do some lesser or other

task, or it is so much easier to preach to some other age or about some other age past or future. We shrink from being just in the front of a battle that is raging. We parade our heroism for battles that were, or far-off dangers that are to be. God forgive us. We have been in the School of Christ. We have heard Him speak. We have learned what He is. The application of noble ideas to life means at last preaching Christ to our generation. The word is out at last—preaching Christ! Cant has abused this term, shallowness has cursed it. Behind these two words laziness, incompetence, reaction and bigotry have tried to hide. Over a vast body of pious humbug, bitter denunciation, narrowness and cant this royal robe has been thrown. It is the fate of all great ideas and terms to shrink in the hands of men. Worship tends to become idolatry, faith to become credulity, liberty to become license unless they are eternally held to their higher meanings. We must not shun a real word because of its abuses. We must redeem it from the low uses and restore it or advance

it to its own true place. Companions of Christ, Students of Christ, Preachers of Christ! How easily the words roll from the tongue and how easily even these words become a shibboleth. Preaching Christ, men say, and mean by it something that never could get into the New Testament. Preaching Christ goes back to the teaching, the activity, the personal life of that historic Jesus who called us into His School that we might be with Him. Such preaching has its roots in a perfect knowledge of Him and His truth. It does make a difference that He was and what He was. In the words "Jesus is the Christ," all the words are emphatic. We learned our message in His presence. We preach Jesus as Lord. We do this in the temple, we do this at home; we do this on the way to Gaza; we do this in modern Antioch to modern Greeks; we do this in Athens to Epicurean and Stoic. We preach Him to the Gentiles, and even in controversial days we rejoice that Christ is preached. This is the Christ "Whom we proclaim, admonishing every man and teaching every

man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ" (Colossians i. 28).

This keeps our ministry personal. This makes us ministers of Jesus Christ. From Him we learn. With Him we live. By Him we are sent. Him we preach. Preaching Christ is the noblest and the hardest thing in this old world. No man will boast of doing it. If he boast he is probably not doing it. If a man be really doing it he will be found walking in the valley of humility, crying out of a hurt heart that he does it so unworthily. This preaching will redeem any ministry from partialness, pettiness, staleness and commonplaceness. It will make preaching in experience as it is in fact the richest, noblest thing in the world. Companions of Christ, students of Christ, preachers of Christ; chosen by Him, to be with Him, sent forth by Him, to preach Him! Down on your knees that you may do it well.

I close this lecture with these sentences from one of those preachers who in their too brief lifetime did it best. "I add but one word more: the burden that weighs down

many a man's ministry is the sense of triteness and commonplaceness. Oh, the wretchedness of feeling how often this has been said which I am going to say next Sunday! Oh, the struggles and contortions to shake off that misery and say something new and be original! But that is all as if the glass reproached itself with colourlessness and tried to stain itself with red and green that men might look at *it*. No; the white glass is saved from commonplaceness by the glory of the picture that looks through it. And the redemption of our sermons as of our characters from insignificance into dignity and worth must come not from fantastic novelties which they invent for themselves, but from their bearing simple and glorious witness to their Lord. Do not fear triteness. Only really hold your own new life honestly up to Christ in thoughtful and loving consecration, and men will see through you something of that Master and Saviour who is forever new."

Brethren, let us "continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word."

LECTURE V

SENT FORTH BY THE
MASTER: WITH A PROGRAM

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SENT FORTH BY THE MASTER: WITH A PROGRAM

LET us recall again the familiar passage which has been at the centre of our study all along. "He appointed twelve that they might be with Him, that He might send them forth to preach and to have authority to cast out demons." Of course this statement has not been treated as though it exhausted or even fully stated the subject. It has been interpreted all the time in connection with other statements bearing on the same subject. Jesus was a teacher—"never man so spake." He was a doer of mighty works and of common good—"He went about doing good." He was a personality, Himself the centre of His teaching and illustration of all His activity. In these features of His life we have been learning of Him. By Him we are now sent forth, with a proclamation and with a program.

Preaching we have considered. To-day we touch another line of suggestion: Sent forth to be doers of a word of which we have been hearers; sent forth with authority to cast out demons; sent forth to go greater works. "Ye are My friends if ye *do* whatsoever I command you." There are those who claim full admission to Christ's inner circle because they believe and repeat what He said. Belief, with them, is the exclusive test of orthodoxy. But orthodoxy evidently involves the plan of Christ quite as truly as it does the teaching of Christ. I would like to be called one of the friends of Christ, and called that by His own lips. The way to that privilege is the way of service.

Three terms confront us to-day at the outset—authority, evil spirits and greater works. Authority is not a popular word. It has been much abused in ecclesiastical as well as other circles and has come to have rather an ugly look. It will be well for us to redeem the term from its evil associations, if we can, and to set the thing itself in its true place. For it has a true place, as I think

we shall see. Our interest in it is not theoretical or academic. In order to reach a fair practical understanding of the term we must study it in Jesus' practical exercise of it. What authority did He exercise? What authority did He confer or delegate? What He exercised bore upon His program. What He confers bears upon ours.

We must at once be impressed with the scope of Jesus' authority and the restraints of it; its absoluteness at many points and its reserves at many others. It does not puzzle us, nor startle us, nor offend us as seen in Him. Whether exercised in the realm of teaching, or exercised over nature, over evil, or over conduct it all seems perfectly natural. Men who heard Him occasionally marvelled, but we do not. And His authority was never imposed in a hard and arbitrary way. He assumed to be, and, I think, showed Himself to be "supreme Master in the ethical domain"; supreme Master over nature in the interest of life; supreme Master in the realm of religion, and supreme Master over evil. But His mani-

festation of authority is unique. He had no examples to follow and has had too few imitators. One seeking in His conduct warrant for ecclesiastical or civil tyranny will fail to find it. His authority was the most compelling and the least exacting in history.

Still we are not called to praise it. We are only set to understand it, and to understand it not as a speculative or academic matter, but as a purely personal one. We are not making a philosophy but a ministry of help and power. His authority was the authority of one speaking the truth best worth believing, having the program best worth following, and being the person best worth obeying. He claimed the obedience of men, but did not break their wills by superimposing His own. He justified His claim upon their lives by the character of His own life and the use to which He proposed to put theirs. He called for the belief of men in the realm of religion. He justified that claim by the truths He revealed and taught. They were worthy of belief. Upon many subjects He did not speak. He has

left a larger area of liberty and has more perfectly preserved liberty within the area of His revelation than any other great religious teacher. He was the master, not the slave, of nature. He was the master, not the slave, of evil. Men acknowledging His mastery do not lose their liberty.

These seem to me the areas in which, for all practical purposes, His authority has meaning for us. He claimed men for the kingdom. He delegated that authority also to us. In His name we also may claim men from their own lives for His service. He spoke on the fundamental matters of religion, of religious life and truth, without doubt or uncertainty. He delegated that certainty on these mighty matters to us. He used nature for His kingdom. He authorizes us to do the same—not always in the same way but in the same spirit. The material world is the servant, not the lord, of the things and purposes of Christ. Wealth does not belong to men, it belongs to Him. He was lord over unclean spirits. It never occurred to Him that evil was His master. He gave author-

ity over evil to those whom He sent forth. He saved His own authority from reproach by the way He exercised it. He gives to us a perfectly defensible authority to be exercised in His name and in His manner. Authority in these matters, exercised in Christ's name, in His spirit, with His discernment and restraint and for His purposes is beyond all criticism or objection. When it gets beyond the region in which He exercised it and far beyond that in which He delegated it; when it loses His insight and is exercised in a temper wholly unlike His own; when it becomes unrestrained and tyrannical, and is exercised for secondary and unchristlike purposes, then authority becomes unspeakably ugly and offensive. The authority of Christ in the realms in which He exercised it is the most beautiful thing in the history of personal influence. Ecclesiastical tyranny, exercised in realms He never pretended to control, is one of the ugliest exhibitions which the Christian centuries have to show. We have not always kept the balance, or the spirit, or observed the

area within which authority is ours. Men have ever been prone to exercise or assume an authority not given them and to ignore that which Jesus bestowed. Part of our struggle in the Christian church has been to keep authority where it belonged, and to preserve the emphasis at the right point. Leaders in the church, for example, have claimed more often the authority to define what men must believe and what they should think rather than authority over unclean spirits. It is easier to assume mastery over thought and faith than over wrong. There would have been less conflict, I think, and more peace and progress if authority had been steadily directed against evil ; if all leaders of the church had from the first lived up to their heritage, not as lords over all opinion, but as lords over all wrong. It would be worth while to have spent these hours together if we should learn here to drop the authority which we have assumed and take the authority to which we are entitled. I am minded to propose to add to the forms used in our ordination service a

new phrase: "In our Master's name, take thou authority over demons, to cast them out of men and society." If you are seeking to be masterful men here is the chance. You may tyrannize over all the demons you can find. The authority of Christ as Redeemer from sin is absolute.

Perhaps this is enough for this phase of the subject. We must now find if we can, in a little more detail, the program of those who are sent forth. And this we can do only by a careful study of our first documents in the light of modern conditions and life. I have not made myself at all clear if I have not made perfectly manifest my conviction that the program is not a simple, but a complex one, with many essential elements. These in part we now consider.

Bruce's account of what the first disciples were to do embraces the following items: They were to preach, to rid the world of evil, to give a faithful account of Christ's words and deeds, to present a true and just image of His character, to offer a true reflection of His spirit, to make disciples

of all others and to found a kingdom. That is not a simple schedule. It is elaborate and complex. It would not be accepted at all by some quite worthy people. On the one hand are those who declare that all we have to do is to bear testimony, that we have nothing to do either with results or social conditions. On the other hand are those who regard bearing testimony as a very useless thing. They lay emphasis upon changing conditions. Somewhere between these two extremes and including the truth in each most of us stand. Nevertheless for all of us the elective principle has undue weight. My conviction is that the majority of the graduates from the School of Christ must be general practitioners rather than specialists. Such men are sorely needed and very emphatically demanded. Munger in speaking of the Church says: "The Church is in its analytic stage of development and awaits its synthetic period when its various elements of truth and power shall be brought into harmonious relations. It is now insisting on a few things, antagonizing or ignoring many.

But such is not the true Church. It is a choir of chanting worshippers, it is a hospital, a school, a charity house, a company of preachers, of missionaries, of students ; it is a university in which all God's works and ways and all human institutions are massed for universal ends."

The simple life is the centre of current Christian talk, but the true simple life for us is not made by a process of elimination, but by a process of harmonizing and balancing of complex elements of life and power.

Now in order to make clear to ourselves the scope of our task we must use three very old and familiar words. Christianity has to do with the individual, with society, with the world. That is entirely commonplace and unsensational. But a sensation after twenty centuries is rather hard to find. Here again we run across that vicious elective principle. One man becomes an evangelist, caring nothing for either social righteousness or missionary activity. Another becomes a social reformer, caring nothing for personal redemption or world-wide conquest. An-

other throws his whole weight on missions, rejoicing far more over one Hindoo converted than over any revival in his own town, and aflame with interest in India's social unrest and social wrong while he cares nothing about and does nothing to cure the social and organized evils of his own city. And one thing is set over against another, choice being made between them. One method is chosen or exalted in a most futile way. Thus it will be said: "Redeem men and you will easily get a redeemed society." And all social redemption halts until we can get all men redeemed. Another cries out: "Redeem conditions so that individual redemption shall have a fair chance. Let us suspend all revivals until we clean out all saloons and all brothels. Let us not attempt the conversion of a working man until we have secured for him better housing and better wages." And all this halts the kingdom. Men have been slow to see that the program of Christianity is complete and balanced and all parts of it must be going forward all the time. We cannot be doing just part of the

work of Christ any more than we can be preaching just part of the truth of Christ. If we do we shall only be touching part of the life to which Christ sends us. Let us have done with partial measures and partial messages, with doing part of the work of Christ and using part of His truth. We are to touch all life, and that requires all truth and all effort.

The graduates of the School of Christ have not gone very far towards completing their task. We have not redeemed all the individuals in any community. We have not wrought a complete work upon many individuals, even among those in process of perfect redemption. We have not brought very near the fact of human brotherhood. We have not yet brought about the kingdom of God anywhere, and in most of the earth we have hardly begun. And, indeed, I think we need to define again for our generation just what we propose to do. Certain it is that some very familiar terms have become very vague and unclear terms. Our use of these terms is often a substitute for

our clear understanding of them. Take the matter of the individual, for example. What do we propose to do for him? Get him saved, of course. What does that mean? Get him converted, of course. But that only states an early stage of the process. That step is so important and often so dramatic that it blinds many to the full scheme for a converted man. A religion out of which conversion had gone would be no true and effective religion at all. A religion which continually lives in and lives on a perpetual harking back to and repetition of that elemental experience becomes wearisome and dwarfing at last. Conversion is so good and vital a thing that it is a shame to have it spoiled. Part of the unhappy backsliding of our history is due to men's weariness of that first initial experience as though it were final. "Men really get tired being born again so often."

It seems to me that a redefining of the Christian life in its personal aspects and characteristics is a living demand. Such definition should not be made in the terms

of a scholastic theology ; not so much in the terms of medieval metaphysics as in the terms of personal life and experience. What does Jesus Christ propose to do for and in and with a man—a man now living? What is the scope of personal change, personal improvement, personal growth towards perfection of life and character ; the ideal of religious experience and religious education ; the program as it affects the man himself and his relations? And what are the forces, the agencies, the methods through which God's redemption and education of a man shall be carried forward? This is not a medieval nor a scholastic matter. The world's work waits on Christian character.

Says Peabody: "The teaching of Jesus, even when its form is social, is fundamentally personal. Out from behind the Social Question emerges the antecedent problem of the Christian character. It is for others to plough and harrow the field of the world, to arrange its schemes of work and wages, of politics and reform ; the mission of Jesus is to create a type of character which shall be sown like

good seed in the waiting field and possess it as children of the kingdom. The more commanding the Social Question grows, the more essential becomes this demand for people fit to meet that question. The more intricate is the machinery of the world, the more competent must be its engineers. At every point the Social Question drives one back to the antecedent question of character ; from the acquisition of goods to the need of goodness ; from the problem of cheapening the product of labour to the problem of raising the standard of men ; from things to life ; from the thought of the world as a factory to the thought of the world as a field, where the good seed are the children of the kingdom. The problem of other centuries was that of saving people from the world ; the problem of the present century is that of making people fit to save the world " (*Jesus Christ and Christian Character*, p. 17).

In this whole matter of Christian life terms have become rather set. It is easier to retain an old phrase however shop-worn than to adopt and adapt a new one. And many

have lost interest in the easy and conventional phraseology which does not seem to them to bear a close relation to the facts of life itself.

One of the pressing tasks of the new age is the better definition of the Christian life, the recognition of immense temperamental and other differences among adults, and a recognition of the vital difference between adult life and child life. Divine grace, divine help and divine operation on life are essential at every stage of life, but the necessity is not the same at every stage. There are diversities of operations. Many men are only partially effective in influencing all types of life because they use so few types of truth and religious appeal. In some churches we have only had one door open into the kingdom and one room in the kingdom for all sorts. At the point of religious life, what Jesus Christ proposes to do for an individual, old or young, old and young; good and bad, partially good and partially bad, at this point lies our imperial appeal. At this point also lies our tragic failure. The ancient Jews

were more concerned about saving institutions than about saving life. Jesus' concern was and is for life. Wine-skins, institutions, phrases are all for the wine of life and life itself. The life of many a church would be saved as the ministry of many a man would be saved by a clear answer to the question: What does Jesus expect us to do for an individual? This will define the work of Christ for the person and will define the program for those who have been in His school. The answer will not set aside those gracious, divine, essential influences of the Holy Spirit without which there is no Christian life, nor will it tie those influences to phrases from which meaning has gone, or phrases which never had any meaning for the men now living. We are men savers, not phrase savers.

The answer will set in its right place all that ancient wisdom known as nurture and admonition, and all that modern movement known as religious education.

How important this is in both its personal and social aspects few understand. If

we did estimate it at its full value surely the churches would not be so lame and so ineffective; families would not be so weak in their religious care of child life. Did the Master mean to teach us that the recovery of one lost was more important than keeping ninety-nine in safety? The joy of the angels over one recovered is a perfectly natural joy, but not because one is worth more than the rest of the hundred, who have been clean and decent. The good shepherd will leave the bulk of his flock while he scours the mountainside to find one stray sheep, but he will not leave the ninety and nine to themselves, to wander and get lost while he is gone on his noble errand. He will leave them in safety and under care and protection. The woman will hunt as she ought the coin lost from her bracelet. Its absence destroys the perfection of the bracelet. But she will not throw the bracelet away or leave it on the sidewalk to be stolen while she is hunting that one lost piece.

Now religious education is not a substitute for religious revival. One good thing is

never a substitute for another good thing. But the religious education of the individual beginning in youth and lasting forever is an essential part of our necessary program. It was not to childhood but to manhood that the Master said, "YE must be born again." That it must become like childhood was what He told wrong manhood.

Here many men who have been in the School of Christ fail. They look down upon the teaching of children. In many places our whole educational system is upside down in this respect. Elementary subjects are simple, therefore teachers of elementary subjects can be carelessly chosen, inadequately prepared and poorly paid. We reserve our ablest teachers and our largest salaries for advanced subjects and graduate students. But we are not teachers of subjects, elementary or advanced. We are teachers of persons. And the kingdom of heaven has a little child for its type. The pastor or the teacher who can set the feet of childhood in the way of life is doing the largest work in the world to-day. Arnold so taught Eng-

land's little boys that he gave to England a generation of mighty men. Do not worry lest your great abilities should be wasted on children. Only be afraid that your stupidity will prevent you from doing a mighty work among them.

The social phases of religious education will demand attention. The Religious Education Association arose in response to a mighty need. Its threefold purpose is stated in these three sentences :

To inspire the educational forces of our country with the religious ideal.

To inspire the religious forces of our country with the educational ideal.

To keep before the public mind the ideal of Religious Education, and the sense of its need and value.

These are among the unsolved problems. Shall I add now that in my judgment there never was such manifest need of the work of the Religious Education Association as there is to-day? The perfectly startling disclosures made in many realms indicate that America must be saved at the point of char-

acter. The Dean of the New York University School of Commerce declared before a Cooper Union audience that "The trouble is not that there is a low standard of honour and morality in business, but that there is no standard at all. Well-meaning men," he added, "often are at a loss to determine whether a certain profitable policy is honourable or dishonourable. There is no unanimity of opinion with regard to the rightness or wrongness of many of the most common commercial transactions." In the most notable volume on Sociology published in recent years precisely this same general declaration is made that there is no uniform standard of morality. The President of Cornell University has publicly declared that ours is a generation that has no fear of God before its eyes, that the age is money mad, that Americans are rapidly reverting to the worship of mammon and that God is forgotten for gold. These may be thought to be the overheated utterances of men who are excited, but they indicate a wide-spread feeling based upon very wide-spread conditions.

I must emphasize, however, two more features of our essential program. Recall again the list of things we are to do: "to give a faithful account of Christ's words and teachings; to present a just and true image of His character, and to offer a true reflection of His spirit; to rid the world of evil, to disciple the nations, to build a kingdom." Our work is to be preachers, reformers, interpreters, saints, mystics, missionaries, and social redeemers. The list is rather appalling but very commanding. This looks like a man's task. To rid the world of evil, personal and organized, is not business for a holiday. We wrestle not against flesh and blood. The ten commandments are directed against idolatry, adultery, murder, lying, stealing, covetousness, Sabbath breaking, profanity and false witnessing.

The fruits of the flesh are: "fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." The list might be expanded. We do not need, however, to

resort to the Old or the New Testament in order to find such a list. Sin is not proved by reference to the Book. Evil is in evidence elsewhere than in the printed descriptions of it. "Christianity," says Clark, "is not a book religion, but a life religion." Even so our task is not the banishment of evil from a book, but from life.

It is utterly unnecessary to elaborate and describe the forms of evil all about us. The forms are not the same in all places, the proportions differ very much in different places, but the thing is everywhere. Some men are so impressed with the presence of evil that they are in a constant conflict with it. They are the men called good fighters. All their sermons are sermons against evil. They abound in the language of denunciation. Such men acquire finally a rich and extensive vocabulary of denunciatory terms. They are always in danger of developing a one-sided ministry. Only in part is the minister a reformer, or rather the man who is exclusively a reformer is not completely a minister. Reformer, however, the minister must be.

Ministry is an inclusive term. Now take a case, a case with which I am familiar. Here is a small town of a couple thousand inhabitants. Into it comes a preacher who has been for some years in a city. He has the city's evils in his mind. He proceeds to denounce the city's sins to the people of that village, adding a few sins in order to show how brave he is. Meantime the sins of that village are enough to occupy him. What are they? The outstanding public evils are the saloons and drunkenness. Profanity and foul speech characterize the talk of the men; slander and petty gossip the conversation of the women. There is plenty of covetousness, no higher criticism; plenty of lying and small cheating, no evolution. It is a bad Saturday that sees no fights on the streets. Readers of the life of James McCosh will recall his account of his native village and the evils that cursed it. It is a picture many of us are familiar with. Into that town came one day another preacher. He studied the town carefully for weeks, until he knew it. Then he set to work to get rid of

its evils. This was his plan : His richest man was stingy and covetous. Other preachers had bravely denounced those sins in the abstract and the distance and then patted on the back the most conspicuous local instance of both. This will not do. This man must be made generous and philanthropic. His evil must be got rid of and his life saved. The saloons had always been in the town, and the town had a bad reputation. Every preacher who came told the town so within his first week, usually making the town angry by so doing. These saloons must be got rid of. This wise preacher carefully began his work. Quietly he appealed to the fatherhood and motherhood and the pride of the town. He did not alienate the ruling party. He used it and its best men, and one fair day the saloons went out. Then straightway this wise preacher began to talk about gymnasiums, libraries, recreation parks and the rest. His covetous man became interested and forgot to be stingy. But the point I am trying to make is that the evil that was in that town was the evil that preacher sought

to rid that town of. And he did not alienate the men who could help him rid the town of the evil. He was not so anxious to show his bravery as he was to get the saloons out and the libraries and other things in.

But now the problem in Chicago and similar cities is not so simple. It is the same, of course, but the same with a difference. It is easy to grow pessimistic over it, but pessimism does not help any more than optimism does. On any theory there is plenty of evil. But a church in a city is not a series of detached, unrelated preaching places. The church must look at the city as a whole and must do in the city everything that needs to be done and by every wise method. One of the fundamental laws of the kingdom is the law of adaptation. The Church has not always applied this law. Country churches, family churches have been planted and kept going in localities where they were almost helpless. They have not been effective for the destruction of evil at all. The church in a city needs a view of the city as a whole, needs to apply

the law of adaptation, and needs to consider its work in its totality. Then one church will not vex another while evil beats them both. I doubt whether the church in any city has this keen sense of its organic unity as it ought to have it. Some years ago the Methodists of London did appoint a large and representative commission to study the city of London with a view to making for the Methodism of that city a program. That commission has made a partial report and the church has begun to work in a scientific way at its problem. Such a commission ought to be appointed for every large city. It is, however, the design of the church to utilize the city missionary society in each city as just such a central agency for the carrying on of its work. The city as a whole, the church working as one force, doing in each place what needs to be done there—that is the ideal. You remember Mr. Kipling's two words on this subject:

“The strength of the pack is the wolf,
The strength of the wolf is the pack.”

The strength of the body is the member, the strength of the state is the citizen, the strength of the organization is the individual, the strength of the Church at large is the local church. All that is true. You cannot make a strong organization out of weaklings and nobodies. But on the other hand the individual is enforced and multiplied by the group. The strong local church in its campaign against evil is strengthened by the general church. I think we mightily need a revival of the organic sense in our fight against the evil in the cities where evil is so powerfully organized. We cannot successfully move against it except in our united and organized capacity.

Perhaps this is as good a place as any to mention another recent movement within the Wesleyan Church in England. I refer to the society organized by our Wesleyan brethren: The Wesleyan Methodist Sociological Society. It has the following features: (1) It is concerned with the actual facts of existing social life; (2) these are to be studied from the Christian point of view; (3) membership

does not commit any one to the support of any political party or social theory ; (4) it is entirely a private association, having no official connection with the church whose name it bears.

The program deals with practical, not theoretical questions. These are amongst the questions of the day. Housing and sanitation, the three allied evils of intemperance, impurity, and gambling, commercial morality, labour questions, including wages, rents, and old age pensions, education in all its parts and bearings, crime and criminals—such an enumeration brings before the mind no abstract questions at all, but matters deeply affecting the very fabric of society as well as the character and destiny of multitudes of individual lives.

Professor Davison writing concerning this new society says : “ Here we touch the very pillars upon which modern civilization rests. Next to the Christian principles themselves what can be more important than the best mode of their application and the removal of all that hinders their application to the teem-

ing, throbbing life of society around us? Some of the problems involved belong to the magistrate, some to the statesman, some to the political economist. But others very nearly concern ministers of religion and active members of churches who cannot step many yards from their own doors to help and improve their neighbours without finding themselves face to face with evils which can never be cured solely by individual effort. What can be more valuable—painful as the process often is—than an examination into the causes of these evils, the extent to which legislation affects them and the promotion of organized efforts for their amelioration. One of the chief needs of our time is an increase of wholesome knowledge on all matters affecting the welfare of civilization, since many forms of evil are due not to malevolence, but to sheer ignorance and blundering. This society will set itself to the important work of collecting information, widening ideas, removing prejudices and gathering from out the social pathway the obstacles which hinder the progress of the chariot of the Lord.

The members will be something better than students of a quasi science, they will be the benefactors of their generation and auxiliaries of the kingdom of God in the earth."

We have made a fine beginning in America. The things already done and the larger things proposed by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America constitute a new and noble chapter in the new acts of the apostles. It looks at last as if the Church was about to approach the whole social question through the door of morals and religion, and approach it with something of union and strength. Hear this from a commission representing more than seventeen million church-members :

"This commission recommends to the official bodies of Christian churches, in order to standardize, as it were, the simplest Christian obligations in the industrial field, to adopt resolutions calling upon employers of labour within those churches to conform, in their industrial operations, to these three simple rules :

"One day's rest in each seven."

“Reasonable hours of labour.”

“A living wage based on these reasonable hours of labour.”

In the Methodist Episcopal Church there has been organized what is known as the Methodist Federation for Social Service in response to what seems the responsibility of the Church to meet the social problems of the day with a Christian answer. This movement does not depart from Methodism but allies itself with the very genesis and history of the Church itself. One of the statements issued by the body points out how “the Methodist movement in England began with the same social spirit. Work at Oxford among the sick, the poor, and the imprisoned led naturally to the later labours of John Wesley for freedom, for temperance, for education, for the relief of the destitute and the afflicted. He encouraged cleanliness, thrift, and saving ; he established loan funds and free dispensaries, homes for the aged, and employment bureaus. He met the needs of the unemployed by opening factories. He organized friendly visiting in

London. In his view works of relief and of reform went side by side with works of devotion; evangelism meant winning men from lives of selfishness to become labourers with Jesus Christ in that social organization—the kingdom of God.”

The objects of the Federation are: “To deepen within the Church the sense of social obligation and opportunity, to study social problems from the Christian point of view, to promote social service in the spirit of Jesus Christ.”

The General Conference of 1908 was so impressed by the spirit and intention of this Federation as to give the movement a semi-official status and to make the following request of the new body:

“We request the Federation to give the fullest possible consideration to the following questions, and to present their findings thereon as a memorial to the General Conference of 1912 for such action as that body may deem wise:

“(1) What principles and measures of social reform are so evidently righteous and

Christian as to demand the specific approval and support of the church?

“(2) How can the agencies of the Methodist Episcopal Church be wisely used or altered with a view to promoting the principles and measures thus approved?

“(3) How may we best coöperate in this behalf with other Christian denominations?

“(4) How can our courses of ministerial study in seminaries and conferences be modified with a view to the better preparation of our preachers for efficiency in social reform?”

And that General Conference announced the Social Creed of Methodism in the following words:

“The Methodist Episcopal Church stands:

“For equal rights and complete justice for all men in all stations of life.

“For the principle of conciliation and arbitration in industrial discussions.

“For the protection of the worker from dangerous machinery, occupational disease, injuries and mortality.

“For the abolition of child labour.

“For such regulation of the conditions of labour for women as shall safeguard the physical and moral health of the community.

“For the suppression of the ‘sweating system.’

“For the gradual and reasonable reduction of the hours of labour to the lowest practical point, with work for all ; and for that degree of leisure for all which is the condition of the highest human life.

“For a release from employment one day in seven.

“For a living wage in every industry.

“For the highest wage that each industry can afford, and for the most equitable division of the products of industry that can ultimately be devised.

“For the recognition of the Golden Rule, and the mind of Christ as the supreme law of society and the sure remedy for all social ills.”

Those are economic questions on their face, but they are religious and moral in their fibre. Of course the minute we begin to urge even so mild a program as that we

shall be told to "preach the Gospel." Men become intensely solicitous for the Gospel whenever preaching touches their practices uncomfortably. But our salvation from a false individualism on one hand and a fatal socialism on the other lies just in this gospel of a good man and a good society. Sin has become much more a social thing than it was in the earlier ages. Says a careful student of conditions, "Modern sin takes its character from the mutualism of our time." "Boodling is the new treason, blackmail the new piracy, embezzlement the new theft, tax dodging the new larceny, child labour the new slavery, adulteration of food the new murder. The fraudulent promoter 'devours widows' houses,' the monopolist 'grinds the faces of the poor,' mercenary editors and spellbinders 'put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.' The cloven hoof hides in patent leather; and to-day, as in Hosea's time, the people 'are destroyed for lack of knowledge.' The mob lynches the red-handed slayer, when it ought to keep a gallows Haman-high for the venal mine inspector, the seller of infected milk, the

maintainer of a fire-trap theatre. The child-beater is forever blasted in reputation, but the exploiter of infant toil, or the concoctor of a soothing syrup for the drugging of babies, stands a pillar of society. The petty shoplifter is more abhorred than the stealer of a franchise, and the wife-whipper is out-casted long before the man who sends his over-insured ship to founders with its crew. . . .

“In England till 1847 any one who knew how to read might commit murder with impunity by claiming ‘benefit of clergy.’ There is something like this in the way we have granted quack and fakir and mine operator and railroad company indulgence to commit manslaughter in the name of business.

“The man who picks pockets with a railway rebate, murders with an adulterant instead of a bludgeon, burglarizes with a ‘rake-off’ instead of a jimmy, cheats with a company prospectus instead of a deck of cards, or scuttles his town instead of his ship, does not feel on his brow the brand of malefactor. The shedder of blood, the oppressor of the

widow and the fatherless, long ago became odious; but latter-day treacheries fly no skull-and-crossbones flag at the masthead. . . .

“How decent are the pale slayings of the quack, the adulterator, and the purveyor of polluted water, compared with the red slayings of the vulgar bandit or assassin! Even if there is blood-letting, the long-range, tentacular nature of modern homicide eliminates all personal collision. What an abyss between the knife-play of brawlers and the law-defying neglect to fence dangerous machinery in a mill, or to furnish cars with safety couplers! . . .

“The blackguarding editor is really undermining the freedom of the press. The policy kings and saloon-keepers, who get out to the polls the last vote of the vicious and criminal classes, are sapping manhood suffrage. Striking engineers who spitefully desert passenger trains in mid-career are jeopardizing the right of a man to work only when he pleases. The real victim of a lynching mob is not the malefactor, but the law-abiding spirit. School-board grafters who

blackmail applicants for a teacher's position are stabbing the free public school. The corrupt bosses and 'combines' are murdering representative government. The perpetrators of election frauds unwittingly assail the institution of the ballot" (Ross, *Sins of Society*).

Now the preacher or church which has no gospel for a situation like that has no gospel at all. Jesus cannot be classified either as a theologian, an ecclesiastic, a revivalist or a socialist, but if there is any wrong of any sort anywhere in the world His face is against it; if there is any injustice His wrath is upon it; if there is any oppression of the weak by the strong His woe is upon the oppressors.

We do not need to set personal evangelism over against social redemption nor choose between the two. No man has fully learned his lesson in the School of Christ unless he has that passion for a man that will send him like the good shepherd out upon the far hills in the stormy night for the one lost sheep, nor unless he has learned to say

to every modern Herod: "It is not lawful for thee to have her"; to every modern Pharaoh, "Let my people go"; to every modern Ahab, "Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?" to every modern David, "Thou art the man"; to every modern tax-gatherer and officer, "Extort no more than that which is appointed, and live on your wages"; to all men, "This is my commandment that ye love one another."

The best definition of Christian ethics ever made, I think, is this: "Christian ethics is the science of living well with one another according to Christ." It is the science of living—that ties it up with conduct. It is the science of living well—that raises a standard of personal excellence. It is the science of living well with one another—that is social. And all this according to Christ both in Himself and His relations. Men are tired of religion as a merely personal thing. God is not the Father of men who are not brothers. This is our work: to reclaim our brother in Christ and for Him, and be one family in Him. It makes the heart beat fast

just to say that. This is enough to command again the strongest men alive. This makes a future for Christianity. To rid the world of evil! To establish the world in righteousness! Close up, oh, friends of the living God! Here is a campaign worthy of the best soldiers the Cross ever had. We are not the guardians of a conventional piety. "Ascetic Christianity called the world evil and left it. Humanity is waiting for a Christianity which will call the world evil and change it."

"He sent them forth with authority over unclean spirits." Evil has no rights. Wherever evil holds a man in its grip or a community in its power it is for those sent by Christ to cry out with authority: "Come out of him." In this we should have neither fear nor weakness. Here is the place for religious authority in full exercise and sway. It is good to be alive and to be in a Christianity with such a future. The best days are not gone. Contests between popes and kings seem cheap and small beside this finer battle between Christ and mammon, between right and wrong. Those older contests were

over petty states and petty rights. This is over human life and human society. The new creature, the new heavens and the new earth are the outcome and royal prize.

In the most valuable book on the social question published in recent years is this parable:

“When the Nineteenth Century died, its Spirit descended to the vaulted chamber of the Past, where the Spirits of the dead Centuries sit on granite thrones together. When the newcomer entered, all turned towards him and the Spirit of the Eighteenth Century spoke: ‘Tell thy tale, brother. Give us word of the human kind we left to thee.’

“‘I am the Spirit of the Wonderful Century. I gave man the mastery over nature. Discoveries and inventions, which lighted the black space of the past like lonely stars, have clustered in a Milky Way of radiance under my rule. One man does by the touch of his hand what the toil of a thousand slaves never did. Knowledge has unlocked the mines of wealth, and the hoarded wealth of

to-day creates the vaster wealth of to-morrow. Man has escaped the slavery of Necessity and is free.

“‘I freed the thoughts of men. They face the facts and know. Their knowledge is common to all. The deeds of the East at eve are known in the West at morn. They send their whispers under the seas and across the clouds.

“‘I broke the chains of bigotry and despotism. I made men free and equal. Every man feels the worth of his manhood.

“‘I have touched the summit of history. I did for mankind what none of you did before. They are rich. They are wise. They are free.’

“The Spirits of the dead Centuries sat silent, with troubled eyes. At last the Spirit of the First Century spoke for all.

“‘We all spoke proudly when we came here in the flush of our deeds, and thou more proudly than we all. But as we sit and think of what was before us, and what has come after us, shame and guilt bear down our pride. Your words sound as if

the redemption of man had come at last. Has it come?

“‘You have made men rich. Tell us, is none in pain with hunger to-day and none in fear of hunger for to-morrow? Do all children grow up fair of limb and trained for thought and action? Do none die before their time? Has the mastery of nature made men free to enjoy their lives and loves, and to live the higher life of the mind?

“‘You have made men wise. Are they wise or cunning? Have they learned to restrain their bodily passions? Have they learned to deal with their fellows in justice and love?

“‘You have set them free. Are there none, then, who toil for others against their will? Are all men free to do the work they love best?

“‘You have made men one. Are there no barriers of class to keep man and man apart? Does none rejoice in the cause that makes the many moan? Do men no longer spill the blood of men for their ambition and the sweat of men for their greed?’

"As the Spirit of the Nineteenth Century listened, his head sank to his breast.

"Your shame is already upon me. My great cities are as yours were. My millions live from hand to mouth. Those who toil longest have least. My thousands sink exhausted before their days are half spent. My human wreckage multiplies. Class faces class in sullen distrust. Their freedom and knowledge has only made men keener to suffer. Give me a seat among you, and let me think why it has been so.'

"The others turned to the Spirit of the First Century. 'Your promised redemption is long in coming.'

"But it will come,' he replied" (Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*).

I have already said that the last great feature in completing the work of Jesus is the discipling of the nations. That means, of course, the modern missionary movement. The word foreign in connection with that movement is not a wholly good word. In the eye of Christ there is no foreign land, to the heart of Christ there is no foreign man.

Professor James has raised the question, What will take the place of war as an appeal to the qualities of heroism, courage and the spirit of conquest, when war shall be no more? A good many people have a tolerant view of war because it does bring out strongly appeal to certain great qualities. Well, I know of nothing more likely to make that appeal than the campaign to rid the world of evil and teach the nations the truth of Christ.

In the presence of evil Christianity asserts authority. In presence of all other religions it asserts its absoluteness. Comparative religion does not mean that all are on the same basis. Christianity goes everywhere saying, "There is no other name." It has no right to stay at home. It has absolute right on all the globe.

War makes masterful appeal to much that is worst as well as much that is best in men. The missionary movement has the heroic, the majestic, the inspiring appeal in it. It appeals only to the best. The victory of Japan over Russia is not so fascinating as the possible conquest of both Japan and Russia by our Master. Here is the true

goal of history. It is not that Russia or England or Germany or America may rule the world, but that the King Eternal, immortal, and invisible, may rule all lands. It is said sometimes that England and the United States could unite and whip the world. But what do they want to whip the world for? They could unite, Christian England and Christian America, to teach the world, to redeem it, to take it and "bind it in every way by gold chains about the feet of God." And that is worth while. For all this involves the founding of the kingdom here and everywhere and now.

Dean Stanley once visited the City Road Chapel, our Methodist Cathedral in London. He was being shown through the burying ground at the rear of the chapel and playfully asked the old sexton "by whom this burying ground had been consecrated." That shrewd old man replied, "By the bones of that good man, Mr. John Wesley." The Dean was delighted with the reply. But Mr. Wesley did far more and far other than consecrate a place where dead men might

be buried. He made safer and cleaner towns and cities where living men lived. His people were expected to die well after living well. Dying well was not the sole test of their religion. It is only a degenerate Christianity that forgets this world and fixes its eye solely on the world to come. Feeling good does not stand apart from doing good. Many a man boasts of the witness of the Spirit and even of entire sanctification who has not the witness of the town and does nothing for the sanctification of life about him. The doctrine of the kingdom does not stand alone, but neither does the doctrine of the witness. Liberty of opinion, Christlike character and social service all go together. Henry Drummond sounded a note we must all hear when he said: "Christ came to make a better world: it was an unfinished world; it was not wise, it was not happy, it was not pure, it was not good, it was not even sanitary: humanity was little more than raw material. Christ's immediate work was to enlist men in a great enterprise for the evolution of the world, rally them into a

great kingdom or society for the carrying out of His plans. The name of this society was the Kingdom of God. To grow up in the complacent belief that God had no business in this great world of human beings except to attend to a few religious people was the negation of all religion. We must study the social welfare of humanity, the spread of righteousness, the amelioration of life, the freeing of slaves, the elevation of women, the purification of religion. Evangelical Christianity must leaven society."

All this stands together. I advise you to read and study such books as Peabody's *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, Matthews' *The Social Teaching of Jesus*, and Rauschenbusch's *Christianity and the Social Crisis*. But I counsel above all that you enter into the uncompleted work of our Master as it lies in these great realms: the redemption of the world from evil, the discipling of the nations, and the establishing of the kingdom of God. Enter into Christ's life. "My Father worketh hitherto. I work." Let us work His works remembering how He

said, "Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Do you remember Longfellow's picture of St. John's wanderings in old age over the face of the earth? Do you remember how he said to himself :

"And I remember still
The words, and from whence they came,
Not he that repeateth the name
But he that doeth the will.
And him evermore I behold
Walking in Galilee,
Through the cornfield's waving gold
By the shores of the Beautiful Sea.

* * * * *

And that voice still soundeth on
From the centuries that are gone
To the centuries that shall be.
From all vain pomps and shows,
From the pride that overflows.

* * * * *

Poor, sad humanity
Through all the dust and heat
Turns back with bleeding feet
By the weary round it came,
Unto the simple thought,
By the great Master taught,
And that remaineth still,
Not he that repeateth the name
But he that doeth the will."

LECTURE VI

SENT FORTH BY THE MASTER:
WITH A PERSONALITY

LECTURE VI

SENT FORTH BY THE MASTER: WITH A PERSONALITY

THE valuable and suggestive volume, *What Shall We Think of Christianity*, declares that Jesus left to the world three things: "A people, a teaching, a power." We are not far from this line of thought in our studies together. Shall we, in this closing hour, briefly recall the way over which we have come before taking the final look at the subject before us? We went into the School of Christ to acquire a truth, to make a life plan, and to become acquainted with a person; all this in order that we might come out into life with a truth, with a way and with a life. The School of Christ, like all true schools, seeks to make men who know, men who can, and men who are. All schools endeavour to give their pupils knowledge, efficiency and character.

There have been many theories of education from Socrates down. The emphasis has not always maintained a perfect balance between elements, but no historic theory of education has failed to include these three elements in some sort of proportion. Some have broken down in practice because they have failed to preserve these qualities in a proper equilibrium. Education can easily become top-heavy or one-sided. Thus it may become predominantly scientific, or predominantly technical, or predominantly literary, or predominantly religious. Whenever either education or civilization does thus fall under the sway of one element, no matter how good in itself such element may be, the result is bad. Guizot's famous generalization holds. You remember how that profound student put the case :

“Guizot shows that, as a rule, the evolution of each of the great phases of ancient civilization was in obedience to some dominant principle, to some element which gained complete mastery, and developed civilization in subordination to itself. He shows how, as

a consequence of this domination of a single element, each of those ancient civilizations either sank into immobility, as in Egypt or in India, or was developed with astonishing rapidity and brilliancy, only to decline and decay just as rapidly, as in Greece and the commercial communities of the Mediterranean. On the other hand he shows that, in the modern civilization of Europe, no one element has ever become powerful enough to exercise permanent despotism over the others; that many strong elements have existed together, stimulating each other, restraining each other, as monarchy, ecclesiasticism, aristocracy, municipal liberty; and that as a consequence, European civilization is far more rich and varied than the ancient, far longer-lived, inclosing in itself principles and powers which by their action on each other constantly renew the youth of modern states."

Our age has many elements but it is probably preëminently a commercial age and so far in danger.

Christianity has not had an easy time pre-

serving the proper balance, nor has it always escaped the consequences of its failure so to do. A doctrinal age, an age which creates great creeds and confessions is quite likely to ignore human conditions. Then comes a reaction in which the Church cares much for men and does not seem to care equally for the forms of her faith or her truth. The pendulum swings from one extreme to the other. Still we feel the imperfection of it all and keep trying to preserve a balance between philosophy and philanthropy, between creed and charity, between things which are all good and which all tend to become exclusive.

Now a student goes into the School of Christ not for one thing, but for at least three. He aims to obtain a body of doctrine, but also much more than that. He aims to acquire a practical life plan, but also much more. He seeks a personal acquaintance, but also much more than that. Jesus' own words lay hold upon him, as bearing upon himself as well as upon Jesus: "The way, the truth, the life." These words seem to touch conduct, creed

and character ; activities, doctrine and life. The three are not separated. Thus the student comes into contact with Christ's deeds, His truth and His Person. The elective system does not seem to apply here. None of this can be omitted. For the student of the School of Christ must become a man of truth, a man of activity and a man of character. He must possess knowledge, efficiency and personality. He has the vision of learning things, knowing things, doing things and being something. It makes a difference whether he has a right body of doctrine, a right schedule of activities, and a right character. Horace Bushnell once wrote of himself: "About this time I passed into a vein of inclusiveness." How rich and suggestive that sentence is! It reaches clear through all we have been thinking during these days. A vein of inclusiveness that gathers up into possession knowledge of Christ's perfect truth, knowledge of His perfect purpose and acquaintance with His perfect life! I do not say personal knowledge and personal acquaintance because I cannot

think of knowledge and acquaintance which are not personal.

Then this vein of inclusiveness takes up as its outcome the interpretation of Christ's perfect truth, the continuing to do Christ's perfect work and the showing forth of His perfect character. We call the first preaching and teaching. We call the second Christian work and activity. We call the third Christian character. And all that He said and did and was is so perfect, and what we say and do and are is so imperfect, that we are ashamed to declare that we have been students in the School of Christ. Still we will go on trying, still go on studying His truth, still go on seeking to do His work, still go on longing to be like Him, still go on submitting ourselves to His influence, hoping that some day we shall so speak, so act, and so live that again it shall be written :

“Now when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled ; and they took knowledge of

them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts iv. 13).

I have spoken very imperfectly if by this time it is not perfectly clear that I am pleading for unity rather than division in both the educational process and its result. At the risk of wearisomeness I have kept on repeating the three great terms, teaching, activities and person, and have urged that no one of them can be omitted from our vital knowledge. Selection is easy, and partial courses are very popular. At bottom this is probably the cause of parties in theology and the Church. Parties arose very early. The Church was yet young when men began to array themselves under great names and to say, "I am of Paul, I am of Apollos and I am of Cephas." The theology of the Church has been Pauline, Petrine and Johannine, with a large party preferring practical James to any of the others. It has been so from the early years until this day. We are classified as Calvinists, or Arminians or something else. A dominant personality is at once a source of strength and a source of danger to the Church

in a given age. He leads mightily, but he often warps individuals and makes parties. So that persons and churches must correct and balance the influence of a strong man lest they become one-sided and unbalanced.

Now it is the wonder and glory of the influence of Jesus that it makes no parties and unmakes no individuals. Without caution, without fear, without the use of any corrective measures to balance any excessive influence a man or a church may submit to His influence and devoutly pray to be made in this likeness. He has given in His own life a new definition and illustration of perfection. He has given for men a new conception and ideal of personal character. Students easily copy the traits of favourite and masterful teachers. The result is not always happy. But we can think without anxiety of the process described in these familiar words:

“For whom He foreknew, He also fore-ordained to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren” (Rom. viii. 29).

“But we all, with unveiled face beholding

as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit" (2 Cor. iii. 18).

It is no wonder that men are drawn to and fascinated by greatness in other men. It is not a sign of weakness but of strength. Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship*, and Emerson's *Representative Men* both illustrate the universal search for strength and greatness. In many respects they both reveal the disappointing result of that search. Here is Christianity's strength. Its Person is able to subdue all things and all types unto Himself. He is not classed with the men of action, but He is the chief man of action in history. He is not ranked with the men of art, but He leads them all. He is neither artist, warrior, poet nor author in any technical sense, but is in His perfect personality the Lord of all such. He dwelt in one century and one land, and overleaped all local, national and temporary conditions and became the "first citizen of the world." It belongs to other men to have characteristics, it be-

longed to Jesus to be universal. Every type of man feels at once the supremacy and mastery of Jesus. He is at home in this new century even more than in the first, and so much at home in the Western world that we almost forget that He was a native of the Orient.

There is no danger in the submission of one's own personality to such a person. He restores and completes the individual. Men become complete in Him not by the destruction of qualities but by the perfecting and balancing of qualities. He had the passion for truth, the passion for service and the passion for personality. Problems concern us,—the social problem, the race problem, the missionary problem. Men concerned Him. He was always seeking to create character. Only better men can do better work. Only wiser men can teach more wisely. Peabody puts it in a sentence, for every century of Christ, when he says: "The more intricate is the machinery of the world the more competent must be its engineers." Deeper than the question of the kind of work we are

to do, deeper even than the question of the truth we are going to teach, is the question of the kind of men we are going to be. Christ is still in the business of taking modern Johns and Simons and Matthews and enlarging them so that they can teach the larger truth and do the greater works of the twentieth century.

“The Christian ministry is the largest field for the growth of a human soul that this world offers. In it he who is faithful must go on learning more and more forever. . . .

“It is continual climbing which opens continually wider prospects. It repeats the experience of Christ’s disciples, of whom their Lord was always making larger men and then giving them the larger truth of which their enlarged natures had become capable.”

It is not alone that His personality came above the horizon there in the first century. That has seemed so wonderful that we have not always remembered the rest. But go back to Christ’s first great sermon. The Sermon on the Mount has been called the Magna Charta of the kingdom. What was

in it then, what lingers in it yet with abiding force and meaning? A new prophet had spoken after centuries of silence. Even their fathers had never heard any one speak like this. A new message had come as out of the heavens. Then as later they marvelled at the words which proceeded out of His mouth. But the men entranced with the new prophet speaking this new word saw with swift and insistent clearness that a new self had arisen before their view. It is the magna charta of the individual as well as of the kingdom. Some would remember one sentence and some another as they went away after Jesus had spoken, but the one sentence that each would remember, the sentence ringing in their hearts like "the mellow lin-lan-lone of evening bells," was this: "*Ye* therefore shall be perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect." This meant not only a new truth but a new personality. They knew the commandments which they had kept and broken. They knew the great names of their noble history. Some of them had tried to be as good as Moses or Abraham or David.

Some had succeeded fairly well. But here was a new ideal. It stood there in "living definition" before them. This new theology of Jesus meant a new humanity in Jesus. Men must be different since Jesus has come. The coming man must come by Him. After that first sermon many words will be spoken and written; many things will be done; miracles will be wrought upon nature, upon life and upon person; prayers will be made, crosses carried and graves opened; Holy Spirit will come and Holy Word be written, but this will be done that holy men may come to be.

Mighty enterprises need mighty men. Small men undertake their control and both are ruined. Holy enterprises need holy men. Unclean hands lay hold of such enterprises to their eternal hurt. What an active person shall carry to heathen or to slum will depend upon what one is, as well as upon what one knows. I know a city missionary who brings only activity and good intentions to his task. His hands are busy but empty. He distributes apples and potatoes to the poor, but his

own life is barren of the fruit of the spirit. He has forgotten that a rich life is the best gift to poverty. The man of the twentieth century like the man of the first must give Jesus full and sovereign power in his life. He must not only learn Jesus' truth and continue Jesus' activities. He must himself be transformed into the same image. It is pitiful to see any one, no matter how earnest or zealous, touching empty hands with empty hands; pitiful to see one trying to help in slums or in heathenism himself unspiritualized, untransformed, unchristlike.

There is an ancient Jewish legend to the effect that the true pronounciation of the name of Jehovah has been lost, and that whoever recovers it will have open to him the secrets and forces of nature and hold in his hand the hearts of men. This is more than a legend. There came one who did pronounce the Eternal Name with true filial accent, heart of Son answering to heart of Father, character of Son answering to character of Father, life of Son answering to life of Father. They were one, in purpose and char-

acter. At the word of that true Son tossing waves grew quiet. Deaf ears and blind eyes opened as He spoke. Dead men arose at His command. Men in trade and men at work followed Him when He told them to. The poor clung to Him in love, the weak gave themselves to Him in faith, the strong in obedience, the rich in adoring love. His way, His truth, His life, being the way, the truth and the life gave Him power. He knew how to speak the ineffable name. He was sovereign Lord of nature and the world of men is at His feet.

The significance of the incarnation is much more likely to be underestimated than overestimated. Its meaning as a revelation is admitted. In Christ God revealed Himself. Its significance for truth is clear enough. Jesus was the truth and He taught the truth. Its significance for redemption is beyond all dispute. "There is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby men may be saved." He alone is a redeemer from sin. He alone has power on earth to forgive sins. The significance of the incar-

nation for faith and doctrine has had continued emphasis through the Christian centuries. All this is well. We have not begun to exhaust the meaning of the incarnation in these realms. It is the supreme fact in history.

But the significance of the incarnation for personality, for the conception of personality and for personality itself will bear an emphasis it has not often had. I mean something more than Christ in religious experience. I mean Christ in human life, the new incarnation. God in all men's life means rather more than God in one life alone. The incarnation is not a thing to fear or to set apart. It is a thing to rejoice in and set into the very centre of life. In Him *we* live and move and have *our* being.

Christ has given us a new conception of human personality. He not only defined God, He defined man. He not only made clear the divine personality, showing its reality and disclosing its qualities, He illustrated and in His own person defined human personality.

He brought a new revelation, a new Gospel, a new religion. He brought in His own Person and character a new and commanding ideal. And He brought into human life a new and transcendent power by which men might be renewed in His own image. In the Christian plan a new word goes before personality, a word which sets it apart from all other conceptions. Personality as conceived by philosophy or science apart from Christianity lacks that word. Jesus Christ the redeemer has set out into the world the conception of a redeemed personality. He told men about God. Men have thought of God under the term absolute. Christ did not use that term but He left us in no doubt about the absoluteness of His Father. He told men that this absolute Father was in moral quality and personal character like Himself. "I and My Father are one." "He that hath seen Me hath seen Him." We reason back from Jesus whom we have seen to His Father whom we have not seen, and make no mistake. Then He said, "Ye shall be perfect," and one of the

early apostles caught up the idea in the words "We shall be like Him."

"And God is always like Jesus." No matter where He appears or how He reveals Himself, it is in this character. But the truth of a Christlike God compels the doctrine and awakens the expectation of a Christlike man. The meaning of the incarnation for personality breaks in upon our metaphysics and our theology like a new personal revelation.

"It belongs to Christ's priesthood, as conceived in the letter to the Hebrews (1) that in Jesus God should see His ideal for humanity for the first time completely realized in a human life; (2) that the purpose and effect of this realization should be the reproduction of relations of similar intimacy in the case of all those who through Jesus have found the true way of access to God. . . .

"The perfect man, as Christianity conceives him, would be one who should unite in himself the consciousness of untroubled communion with God and the self-forgetting

love of man which characterize the experience of Jesus, as our Gospels portray it to us. . . .

“It is not that in Jesus we have the manifestation, for a brief period, of divine powers and relations normally absent from human life; but that in Him for the first time there has been completely revealed in a human life that abiding relation between God and man which gives life its profoundest significance, and which warrants our faith in the ultimate realization of the divine ideal in humanity” (Wm. Adams Brown, *Outline of Christian Theology*).

We cannot teach the truth of Christ unless we have first learned the truth from Him. We cannot carry to our age the plans and activities of Christ unless we have learned His plans and activities from Him. Shall I go on? Dare I go on? Dare I or any one stop? We cannot repeat and interpret and impart the life of Christ unless we have from Him received that life. There is a story of a Chinaman named Wang who as teacher and preacher exerted a wonderful influence.

The other Chinese Christians said of him :
“ There was no difference between him and the Book.”

It appals us to read soberly, intensely, those early words about the influence of our Master upon personality. We have taken those rich Oriental terms and either converted them into doctrinal shibboleth or the hard terms of Western theology. We have taken the personal quality, the red blood, out of too many of them. Can we face such terms as these with composure? “ Living Epistles,” “ Witnesses of Me,” “ Henceforth I call you friends,” “ Now are we the sons of God,” “ Put on Christ as a garment,” “ Christ in you,” “ If any man be in Christ he is a new creation,” “ He has passed from death unto life.” Is this language only for first centuries and for New Testaments, written in simpler ages? Or does it have a personal meaning for men to-day? The Bible has been interpreted in terms of theology. Will it bear interpretation in terms of life? Will it finally bear any other interpretation? The incarnation

has been interpreted in terms of metaphysics, theology and scholasticism. Will it bear interpretation in terms of personality? Will it finally bear any other interpretation than the personal one? Life itself has been interpreted in terms of science, psychology, metaphysics and theology. The use of abstract terms has been free and constant. Will life bear interpretation in terms of the incarnation? Will it finally bear any other interpretation?

Can we ever get down to the bottom or up to the top of the words Fatherhood as applied to God and Sonship as applied to man except by way of the incarnation and its inevitable implications for personality? Do we not here obtain the only true conception of personality and its qualities? Do we not here obtain the only true conception of what God's Fatherhood means as a present fact and a vital force in life? Do we not in this one instance of perfect Sonship obtain the only true conception of what sonship means to any modern man?

By personality, as applied to Jesus, I do

not mean the list of His good qualities. A living preacher has named them as follows : "Strength, sincerity, reasonableness, poise, originality, narrowness, breadth, trust, brotherliness, optimism, chivalry, firmness, generosity, candour, enthusiasm, gladness, humility, patience, courage, indignation, reverence, holiness and greatness." Long ago Bushnell in his famous tenth chapter did something of the same sort. But there is almost no end to such a list. Such additional words as meekness and lowliness of heart rise almost spontaneously to one's lips.

Personality is not simply a list of qualities however noble and admirable. Character is something more than characteristics. The personality of God is not stated when His attributes have been named. Religion can neither live nor move in the region of abstractions.

The definition of personality is not easy. It is a fundamental term. Writers have generally agreed upon certain elements as making the essence of personality. Sometimes four terms are used, sometimes only

two. If four they are these : Self-consciousness, consciousness of power, consciousness of obligation, self-determination. When two terms only are employed they are self-consciousness and self-determination, and these are made to include the others. Frederick W. Robertson said that "personality is made up of three elements : consciousness, character and will." For our purposes here, I prefer to use the four familiar terms already quoted, and to state them a little more personally and a little less academically than before. In this I am following from memory a small but exceedingly luminous volume by Canon Farrar. I have not seen the little book for twenty years but its outline cannot be forgotten. Self-consciousness seems to lie at the base both for Jesus and for us. The first fact of personality must be expressed in the words : "I am." This must be fundamental both for God and man. Jesus is the living definition of this term both for God and man. When He says "Before Abraham was I am," He seems to make luminous those older words : "Say

that I AM hath sent thee." Divine self-consciousness and human self-consciousness meet in Jesus and in Him each is defined. And just as Jesus has sharpened and clarified the idea of a personal God, individual and self-controlled, distinct from though ruling in all other existence, so He has accentuated and elevated the idea of individual life. In Jesus Christ God uttered Himself to the world; in Jesus Christ the individual man became conscious of himself. When Jesus said to Philip: "He that hath seen Me hath seen Him," He set out into the world a conception of a personal God never before so clear, never since dim, and never since surpassed. And when He said, "I in them and Thou in Me," He lifted individual human personality to a height towards which the whole creation moves. He did not intend to reveal a vague and impersonal God. He did not intend to reveal a vague or weak or low conception of human personality. Never was any God so close to, so identified with, so regnant in the world, as was the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, but He was

all this because He was so transcendent over it all, because He could say "I am that I am." Never was any man so completely identified with humanity, so merged in human brotherhood, so filled and possessed by the infinite as the man of Jesus Christ, but the man could be all this because so completely an individual man. Christianity's man is Christianity's indisputable answer to the world. He can say "I am."

The second fact of personality is its consciousness of power, expressed in the words "I can." It has the abiding sense of freedom, of power, of self-control, of self-grasp. The soul's grasp upon itself, its ability to stand with or to stand against the world, to stand with or against God Himself is a fact manifest in all real life.

"I am the Captain of my Soul.

* * * * *

"So near is glory to our dust,

So nigh is God to man

When duty whispers low 'Thou must'

The youth replies, 'I can.'

* * * * *

"Our wills are ours, we know not how ;

Our wills are ours to make them Thine."

Men cannot do everything in this world of vast forces and gigantic tasks, but in the face of all forces men can choose and that is power.

The third word that personality speaks is the word "I ought," expressing the sense of obligation. This, too, runs clear up and down the scale of conscious, personal being. It is a word of God as well as a word of man, a word of man because a word of God. The man who can knows that he must be the man who does. The law governs all being, divine as well as human. The difference between the perfect God and the imperfect man is not in the law that applies but in the free application of the law. What the perfect God ought to do that He does. What the imperfect man ought, and knows that he ought to do that often he does not. And this is the essence of wretchedness in man for a contradiction has broken into personality. He is blessed and not wretched only when the perfect law of personality perfectly operates. The breaking of the law creates the body of death.

The sharper the sense of individuality, the larger the consciousness of power, the deeper and more compelling is the sense of obligation. All of this reached its visible climax in the earthly life of our Master. Because He was what He was and could do what He could do He had the insistent sense that He must. It was He and not another who said, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me." He knew that He could, and He did. He did it so perfectly that at the end He could look His Father straight in the face and say, "I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do." It is not easy to go on. Human personality has so many gaps in it. In the face of this perfection of Jesus, our lives have so many breaks and contradictions that we are ashamed to face ourselves.

The fourth word of personality is the word "I will," expressing determination. Self-consciousness must be completed in self-direction; self-assertion in self-surrender to the highest. "Master, I will follow Thee." Everything lies in that sentence, the recognition of self, the recognition of power, the

recognition of freedom, the recognition of obligation, and the perfect self-determination. Personality has found its Master, and by perfect act of will has gladly yielded itself to Him. This shoots through Jesus' own life. He walked this way. We who are in His school go in His company. Listen: "I have the power to lay it down. I have the power to take it again. No man taketh it from Me." "I lay it down for the sheep." This was His Father's will. This was His own meat. He lived on this. He delighted in this. Once in perfect manner

"Love took up the harp of life and smote on all the
chords with might,
Smote the chord of self that trembling passed in
music out of sight."

Circumstances have all changed. Emphasis upon particular qualities is not what it was. But through changing centuries Jesus remains the unchanging pattern of a perfect personality. The incarnation took place, as it must have done, in a particular place and at a particular time, but the incar-

nation became for human life and personality a fact without the limitations of either time or place. The revelation of God made in time becomes valid for all time. The revelation of personality likewise becomes valid for all ages. The incarnation has a continuous value as the pattern for personality. It is not an isolated fact. It fulfilled ages preceding it, and fills full the ages following. Our Master is ever our Master, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. He abides through all changing conditions, the ever living definition of character.

All this might be unbearable. Certain kinds of ability simply oppress and overwhelm men. Human limitations are so many and so marked that perfection in any one simply seems to set such an one apart from all ordinary life. Jesus might have revealed a perfect moral standard. He might have renewed the ancient precepts. He might have set up a new law for conduct and character. He might have revealed the infinite life and have left us simply with an acute sense of its distance from us and its

elevation above us. He would thus have shown Himself full of truth but not full of grace and truth. Bagehot once said : " Men are guided by type not by argument." Jesus gives us type, not argument. The difference between Socrates and Jesus has more than once been observed. " The one argues, the other reveals." The one holds up ideals, the other is an ideal. The one defines the pattern, the other is a pattern.

But still even this might offer only discouragement unless Jesus were both pattern and power. It is worse than useless to heighten one's sense of perfection unless the power to attain perfection be increased. In Phillips Brooks' Bohlen Lectures on " The Influence of Jesus " he said : " Nothing is so imperfect, nothing, indeed, is so melancholy, so tragical as a pattern set before a man which he has no power to attain." There must be a supreme standard, and there must also be an efficient power if life is not to be mocked. Jesus cannot be simply an ideal, like a statue on a pedestal. He must be the power of life even more than its model.

And this, I do not hesitate to say, Jesus is. Once more the present tense is used. You would agree that Jesus was both a model to and a power in those earlier lives. It has been the strength of our Christian experience and belief that they have been rooted in a Christian history. It has often been their weakness that they have lacked in vital continuity and have not employed all the tenses of life. Christ was and is and is to be. "I am He that was dead and am alive and alive for evermore." The Christ of to-day guarantees for life the permanence of the grace and truth which once came by Him. He is still immanent, evermore saying, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." The imitation of Christ is a very real process and a most profitable and essential activity. The "imitableness of Christ's character" is not a fiction. True greatness is neither unapproachable nor inimitable. Whether the imitation be in the older fashion as taught by à Kempis, or in the later manner as indicated by Stalker in the *Imago Christi*, it is a very real experience.

But I am thinking to-day not of the imitation of Christ in either of these wise and worthy ways but of that deeper and more significant thing involved in our living with Him. We are not thinking of the careful copying of individual virtues but of such living like Him, which we learn by living with Him, that we ourselves shall in a deep, real sense practice the incarnation in its high, personal, ethical, religious, vital meaning. Into the metaphysical mysteries of it we are not now to go. But surely there is present meaning for us in the idea of God in a human life ; a human life possessed by and lovingly obedient and responsive to God ; God inspiring and illuminating a human personality ; a human personality so receiving Christ that it also becomes a son of God ; divine Fatherhood forever begetting divine sons, constantly exercising spiritual parentage ; divine sons ever deriving divine life and character from the divine Father ; "God's Fatherhood not simply a fact that has been, but a process that always is and will be."

“Christ’s consciousness was that at every moment God’s thought, God’s will, God’s actual life were being reproduced in Him.” “What God’s Fatherhood meant for Christ Himself, it should mean for us in our measure. God is, or wants to be, our Father in the same manner, even if it be impossible in the same degree, as He was the Father of the perfect Son. And Christ’s thought of God as His Father went far beyond God having sent Him, God watching Him from heaven, God taking a living interest in Him. It included all these things, of course, and yet transcended them all” (Clark, *The Philosophy of Christian Experience*).

We can understand the incarnation only by practicing it. We can learn by practice or experience what it means to put the highest at the service of the lowest, the best at the service of the worst; truth at the service of ignorance, light into darkness, strength into weakness, health into sickness; all that is good into all that is bad, all that is divine under the weight of all that is human, in order that the low may be lifted;

the worst made like the best, ignorance removed, darkness banished, sickness cured, badness transformed the human lifted and restored to God's image. The incarnation is an opaque mystery to all who walk in selfishness; it is radiant with light to those who live with Christ and live like Him. The atonement is a blind perplexity to those who have carried no cross, who have not put themselves into the crush of reconciliation. To those who have practiced the atonement the work of Christ is like an open way. This is the new imitation of Christ, not the copying of particular and choice virtues, selecting those that appeal to our tastes, but the heroic and perfect following of Christ in speech and life and work so that we shall "practice the presence of the holy and atoning life."

Still there remains a word. I said a moment ago that Jesus and Socrates had often been compared. One of those comparisons relates to the two as teachers. That concerns us especially in these studies. It has been said of Socrates that he had great love

for the truth, great love for his pupils and extraordinary ability to communicate his truth to his pupils. It has been thought that the resemblance between Socrates and Jesus is thus very perfect. These sentences are all true as applied to Jesus. He had great love for the truth. No one else ever knew so well what truth would do. No one else ever saw so clearly its personal quality or its personal value. He had great love for His pupils. Having loved them He loved them to the end. Nothing else like it has been seen. He had surpassing power to impart and communicate. He is the model teacher of the ages. Those words about Socrates do all apply to Jesus even more than to Socrates himself. But these words do not fully describe our Master. Socrates could do these three things. Jesus could also do them. There Socrates' power ends. There Jesus' power does not end. Socrates' pupils could do their best to imitate him. He could do nothing to help them. Jesus' pupils can strive to be like Him. But He is not helpless in presence of their high endeavour. He im-

parts Himself to them. He gives Himself to them. He lives in them. They put Him on as a garment. He is formed in them. They are transformed into the same image. Jesus is not merely a fine example. He is a personal power. Just before poor Cranmer's martyrdom he was asked why he believed as he did. He replied: "I have preached many times upon my belief in Christ, but just now I have only one reason, which is sufficient: He is in my heart. I have Christ within me."

Recall again two most thrilling passages. The last night before the Master's crucifixion has come. The atmosphere of that night is so intense and vibrant with meaning that men can hardly bear to live in it even now after the centuries. The Master has spoken to the disciples. He now speaks to God: "I have finished the work. I have manifested Thy name; I have given unto them the words Thou gavest Me. They have received them. I pray for these whom Thou hast given Me. As Thou hast sent Me even so have I sent them." Then the walls of the

centuries fell down. Then the barriers of race and nations were melted. Then the men of Tennessee and of Illinois were caught up into our Master's prayer. Then the Upper Room was opened to us as He went on :

“Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on Me through their word ; that they may all be one ; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in us : that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given unto them ; that they may be one, even as we are one ; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one ; that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and lovedst them, even as Thou lovedst Me. . . . And I made known unto them Thy name, and will make it known ; that the love wherewith Thou lovedst Me may be in them, and I in them ” (John xvii. 20-23, 26).

Then open to that other passage which describes the healing of the lame man and recounts the teaching in connection with it—

the beautiful deed and the beautiful word. The incident seems to gather up in itself almost perfectly all that we have been trying to say. Here were these men who had learned the Master's truth, seen the Master's activities, and became acquainted with the Master Himself, themselves doing what He would have done, speaking the truth as they had learned it, and revealing Him in their speech, their deeds and themselves.

"When the Council saw how boldly Peter and John spoke, and found that they were uneducated men of humble station, they were surprised, and realized that they had been companions of Jesus" (Acts iv. 13).

He chose certain to be with Him. He sent them forth and men realized from what they said and did and were that they had been with Him.

Here our study together must end. As well as I can do it my task is done. Under the figure of a school I have been trying to interpret to the men of at least two great churches as to myself the essence of that ministry which I am hoping and longing to

see before the end of the day comes. The figure of the school breaks down at last. We are never dismissed from the School of Christ. We are sent forth but never alone. From the Master we are always receiving truth. He is ever sharing our activities. From His perpetual presence with us we evermore receive our life. Even as I was writing this final study a teacher, greatly beloved, slipped out of our sight. There are many thousands who will love truth more dearly and see truth more clearly for having known Borden Parker Bowne. He has gone, leaving his teaching and his influence, and the memory of his life. The great Master remains. He is still in His teaching, still working out His purpose for men and the world, still dwelling in and with His own. But the breaking down of the figure is the strength and joy of the School of Christ. For the truth is a living truth, the program a vital program, and the Master Himself a living force, personal and present in His truth, in His program and in those who own Him as Master and Lord.

And I cannot doubt the power or the joy of such a ministry to-day and always, here and everywhere. Nor is there question of its need.

The world grows weary, but such a ministry renews its strength forever. The dust of the day falls upon modern life, but such a ministry is young with the life eternal. That we and all others may so enter the School of Christ, that we shall hear what He says, see what He does and learn what He is; and be so sent forth by Him that we shall set men free by the truth which is in Him, that we shall do life's greater works, and show forth the life hid with Christ, is my constant prayer.

One of the old English Homilies runs as follows :

“Therefore, dearly beloved, let us not forget this exceeding love of our Lord and Saviour. Let us confess Him with our mouths, praise Him with our tongues, believe on Him with our hearts, and glorify Him with our good works. Christ is the Light; let us reveal the Light. Christ is the

Truth ; let us believe the Truth. Christ is the Way ; let us follow the Way. And because He is our only Master, our only Teacher, our only Shepherd and Chief Captain, let us become His scholars, His soldiers, His sheep, His servants. . . . Let us receive Christ not for a time, but forever ; let us believe His word not for a time, but forever ; let us become His servants not for a time, but forever, considering that He hath redeemed us not for a time, but forever, and will receive us into His heavenly kingdom, then, to reign with Him, not for a time, but forever."

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